

BRITAIN'S ONLY SCIENCE STORY WEEKLY

SCOOPS

The STORY
PAPER of
TO-MORROW
2^D
EVERY THURSDAY



**CREATION'S
DOOM** *See Inside*

Germany Builds a— Great New AIR GIANT

80 m.p.h. Zeppelin as Big as a Liner

BRITAIN'S ill-fated experiments in lighter-than-air craft have not deterred other nations. The success of Germany's *Graf Zeppelin*, which will begin a regular run between Europe and South America on May 26, has persuaded Germany to build another giant dirigible—the *L.Z. 129*.

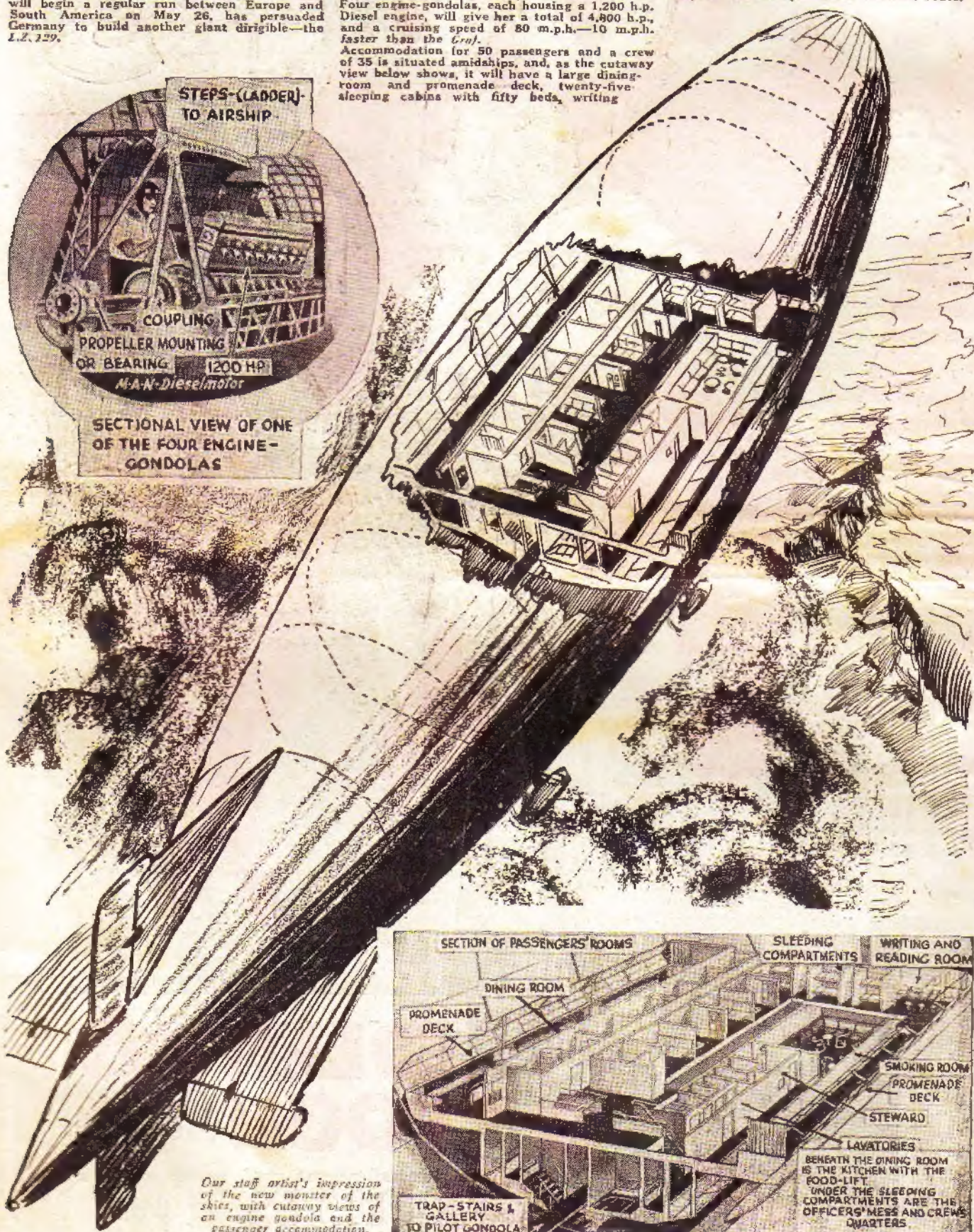
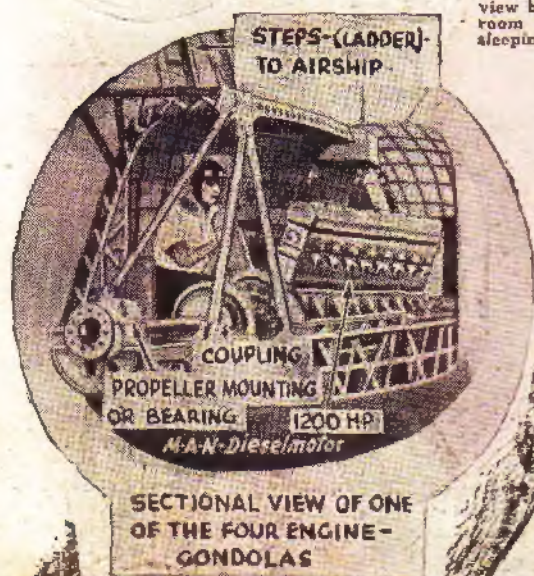
This new ship, which is at present undergoing trials, is 812 feet long—greater than the average ocean-going liner—and has double the accommodation of the *Graf*.

Four engine-gondolas, each housing a 1,200 h.p. Diesel engine, will give her a total of 4,800 h.p., and a cruising speed of 80 m.p.h.—10 m.p.h. faster than the *Graf*.

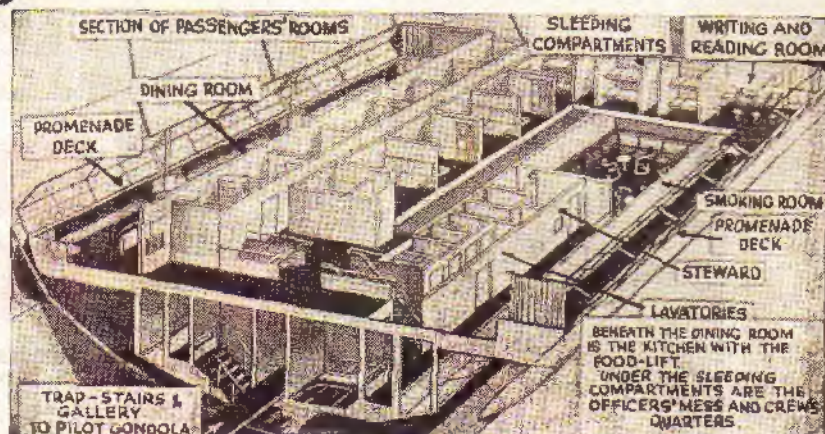
Accommodation for 50 passengers and a crew of 35 is situated amidships, and, as the cutaway view below shows, it will have a large dining-room and promenade deck, twenty-five sleeping cabins with fifty beds, writing

and reading rooms, smoking saloon, and electric kitchens.

The *L.Z. 129* is expected to co-operate with the *Graf* on the Europe—South America route.



Our staff artist's impression of the new monster of the skies, with cutaway views of an engine gondola and the passenger accommodation.



Ice Metropolis

WHAT MYSTERIOUS FORCE causes the Magnetism at the Poles and sends its Power all over the World? Dr. Heddle sets out to solve the mystery.

★ A GANGSTER GOES ON BOARD

HANK GOLDONI checked his stumbling progress and watched through blood-shot eyes the scene before him.

There was three week's growth of red beard on his face, and his furs were begrimed and shabby after his long flight.

For the Law was hafd on Goldoni's trail.

He felt the jab of the Arctic cold probing his skin, coursing into his lungs. He felt the frost forming round his mouth where his breath fell back to freeze.

Hank Goldoni was a "mad dog"—hunted by the Law, disowned by the lawless. He had come North when he made the States too hot to hold him. So he had reached Nome—one of the toughest and most uncomfortable spots on the face of the globe.

Yakoni had nearly broken his hard heart. Instead of picking up gold from the frozen earth as easily as he had gained it from the innocents of New York, he slowly starved in the biting cold.

He killed a man who owned a roulette dive in Dawson, but the Mounties caught him when he was in the act of opening the dead man's safe and he had to get out—quickly. Now they could not be far behind.

It seemed that Goldoni, the lean, human wolf, was cornered at last. He would go back to civilisation to pay the price of his many crimes. Nothing could save him now.

Unless—

He peered closer at a big open depression in the ice-fields beyond a snow-covered hummock.

There, lit by the flaming, fantastic ribbons of the Aurora in the Northern distance, stood the gaunt outlines of two aeroplane hangars. Behind the long, level runway of swept ice, a few rough huts, living quarters of the staff, slept silently under the Arctic night.

This was the most northerly depôt of Alaskan Airways.

But it was something in front of one of the hangars that held Goldoni's attention—a great, sheeted shape which he recognised as a long-distance aeroplane.

Obviously the 'plane was not one of the 'drome's regular "ships." That was why whoever owned it had been unable to berth the craft in the already-occupied hangars.

He knew not when or where it would fly again, but Goldoni was accustomed to taking risks, and now he was desperate.

Cautiously he peered around. There was no sign of life about the sleeping 'drome.

Satisfied, he stole forward, climbed the snow-laden fence that guarded the depôt and slid like a shadow over to that vast sheeted shape.

It was the work of a few moments to raise the canvas covering near the tail, while the simple lock of the luggage compartment soon yielded to his expert fingers.

Beyond the door was a big, roomy cabin, chock full of food bags and other stores for what was obviously to be a long flight.

Goldoni, ignoring regulations, struck a match and examined the compartment thoroughly. Yes, a man could find a safe hiding place here.



Dr. Heddle depressed the key, and a burst of vivid electric fire shot out at the horde of ghastly Gloogs.

But the ex-gunner was cunning. Though he had little technical knowledge of aircraft, and knew nothing about distribution of weight, he realised that something there would have to make room for his own body.

He seized a sack, therefore, that might have weighed a hundred-weight and a half, and heaved it out into the snow. He jumped down after it and carried it, stumbling under its weight, to a group of ice hummocks outside the 'drome. Here he covered the thing with loose snow and then slipped back to the 'plane. Before he closed and relocked the door he lowered the canvas sheet back into place.

All was undisturbed once more. Once, from afar, came the lost-soul call of a wolf. The 'drome slept on.

Gradually the aurora faded, and the shimmering blue stars glittered clearly in the sky. One by one these too disappeared, receding before the giant hand of Dawn.

MECHANICS swarmed about the big, silver monoplane at the Alaskan Airways 'drome.

The sheeting had already been removed, and now the huge machine glittered in the light of the Arctic morning. On each side of the nose, behind the mighty nine-cylindrical engine, was painted the name of the craft—*The Silver Link*.

It was thus that Dr. James Heddle, who had taken two years to build and fit her out with the aid of a group of British and American air experts, had christened her. For she was the mechanical link between an amazing theory and the material proof of it.

The scientist himself appeared at that moment. As he skirted the ice runway and approached the machine from the rough sleeping quarters where he had spent the night, it was difficult to believe that he was Britain's greatest geologist, holding a coveted chair at one of England's most famous Universities.

Clad in thin flying leathers—furs were not needed in the electrically heated cabin of *The Silver Link*—he walked with a loose, rangy stride. He was tall above the average, and only the pince-nez that glimmered against the deep sunburn of his face betrayed his scholastic calling.

He spoke in a lazy drawl to the small air pilot who strode along beside him.

"All ready for the next hop, Frampton. One more halt for fuel at the Grant Island depôt and then—who knows?"

The little air pilot's blue eyes lost some of their twinkle.

He and Heddle had made each other's acquaintance in the remotest corner of the Congo. The scientist was searching for geo-

The Men from the Ice Kingdom

logical specimens in an unusual strata he had found below the bed of an extinct volcano.

Even then he had been toying with the strange theory that had brought him to the Arctic, and in Ellis Frampton, aerial globe trotter and hard-bitten adventurer he had the pilot he needed for his quest.

Frampton was not the sort who feared the Unknown. Peril had been a sort of pastime with him ever since he flew his old Sopwith Camel—in the Great War.

He had agreed to fly *The Silver Link* for Dr. James Heddle without hesitation. But a hint the geologist had let drop before they turned in the previous evening had given him food for serious thought.

"Look here, Professor," he said in his blunt way when they came up to the plane. "I'm afraid I must know the whole truth about this job. Ostensibly we're out to discover the reason why the compass needle is always attracted to the Magnetic North, instead of some other spot on the globe. That's good enough for me. I'm not a scientist, but I've heard the theory of the huge metal lode that's supposed to lie under the Arctic ice.

"But, when we were discussing it last night, you hinted that you didn't believe this. If there's something else you're after, I—well, as I'm also involved, I think I ought to know what it is!"

Heddle's firm mouth relaxed in a smile. That was the longest speech he had ever heard the rather taciturn pilot make. He was silent for a few moments; then, making sure that the Alaskan Airways mechanics were out of earshot, he spoke in his quiet, reassuring voice.

"First, my dear Frampton, I can assure you that we are definitely out to solve the mystery of the Magnetic North. I'm after nothing more spectacular than that. But, as I believe our mission may be attended by more danger than that which we may expect from the naturally rigorous conditions up there, I feel, perhaps, that I should take you fully into my confidence. The reason that I haven't told you my actual theory before is that it is so revolutionary that I haven't breathed it hitherto to a living soul. In a few words, Frampton, I believe that it is simple magnetism, caused by induced electricity, that makes the North magnetic."

He paused to give this simple explanation time to sink into his listener's brain.

But it didn't have the effect he expected. Obviously, Ellis Frampton did not yet see what he was driving at. His next words made it plain to the air pilot, however.

"Admitting the idea of the huge metal lode," he pursued, "the problem I want to solve is: What keeps it so strongly magnetized that its influence stretches to the South Pole, over thousands of miles in every direction? Obviously, Nature herself, who is supposed to be the only inhabitant of the Polar wastes, cannot manufacture electricity in the large and steady quantities necessary. Therefore—"

Ellis Frampton's startled voice interrupted him.

"You—you mean, there must be men—human beings at the North Pole!"

His companion nodded.

"Precisely," he said slowly. "But perhaps not men as we know them. Creatures, though, whatever their physical form, of a high intelligence, and who find it necessary to manufacture electricity—for some purpose which I hope to discover."

He faced North, and the fine eyes behind his glasses seemed to be trying to pierce the frozen distances that still separated him from his goal.

"It's a great quest, Ellis," he murmured. "The Polar regions are still only partly explored. There may be things there undreamt of in our philosophy. You're not a man to shirk danger, but no one we know of has ever faced the dangers that may lie out there. Do you want to turn back?"

The pilot didn't hesitate.

"Let's go," he grunted, and followed Dr. James Heddle up the ladder into the big cabin of *The Silver Link*.

★ THE WORLD BENEATH THE ICE

"IT'S no use, Doc. I can't hold her. We're going down!"

Ellis Frampton's voice was hoarse as he shouted the words down the speaking tube connecting the pilot's cabin with the navigating cabin of *The Silver Link*.

He was juggling nudly with the controls, fighting to zoom from the white wastes below. But in spite of all his efforts the plane was rapidly losing height. Soon they must crash.

Dr. James Heddle looked up from the compass he had been studying among the instruments in the navigating cabin. The needle was spinning round crazily below the thick glass dial.

"All right, Frampton," he answered quietly. "Land her as gently as you can. I think I've found our destination."

He glanced at the indicator of the remote pyrometer. It told him that the temperature outside the warm interior of the *Silver Link* was eleven degrees Centigrade below zero.

He pulled a suit of heavy fur overalls over his shirt and flying breeches, and took another set from a locker, ready for his pilot to don when they landed—or crashed.

In spite of her huge ice-runners, it would have been difficult to land the monoplane on the scarred ice even with the aid of the engine. And now some invisible power had rendered the magnetoes ineffective, and seemed to be drawing the plane itself down, down, down. . . .

A sudden jarring shock flung Heddle to the floor of the navigating chamber. As he sprawled there he experienced a further series of bumps, and then the plane came to a standstill.

Climbing to his feet, the tall scientist saw through the mica windows that they had landed on the ice. And, fortunately, the pilot had contrived to keep his charge on a level keel.

Dr. Heddle stooped through the communicating door into the pilot's cabin to see Frampton still sitting in his seat at the control column.

"Well handled," the scientist congratulated. "Here, put these furs on, and come outside to have a look round."

"Phew! A narrow squeak!" grunted Ellis Frampton, raising his heavy bulk and clambering into the fur overalls the other offered him. "If this is the Magnetic Pole there doesn't seem much to see!"

"Wait!" murmured Heddle, and swung open the door.

A blast of ice cold air swept in, and the pair were glad of their furs as they climbed down the collapsible ladder on to the ice.

Under the pitiless glare of the Arctic sun the white wastes which stretched to every horizon were deserted and forlorn. The only relief to its uniformity was a strange group of ice hummocks like a Druids' circle close to the plane.

"Let's have a look at those," suggested Heddle, and started forward.

But he and the little air pilot had scarcely taken half a dozen strides when they gave a simultaneous gasp of amazement and halted in their tracks.

A score of squat, fur clad figures had appeared from among the ice hummocks and were bearing down on the two explorers.

"Good heavens! Eskimos here! It's impossible!" ejaculated Heddle.

But a closer scrutiny of the approaching men told him that if they were Eskimos they belonged to no known tribe. True their features had a similar Mongolian cast, but their skins were pure white. A strange alabaster whiteness, paler than any European.

"Don't touch your gun," commanded Heddle, as Frampton's hand moved to the

weapon in his belt. "There's too many of them—and, anyhow, they don't appear to be armed."

The new-comers did not halt until they had surrounded the two Englishmen. Then one, who was evidently their leader, issued an order in a strange tongue, and Frampton and Heddle were immediately seized.

Again the geologist told his companion to make no resistance. His eyes were gleaming strangely, for he had recognised the words the leader of the pale-faced men spoke. A keen student of languages, he recognised it as one of the ancient tongues of the Tartars—those old nomads from which the Cossacks and many other races spring.

"What would you have with us and who are you?" he asked laboriously in the same language.

"I cannot tell you," was the reply. "But you must come to Anklogh, our ruler. He will tell you."

"Yes, we will come with you," returned Heddle. "But first let us protect our aeroplane from the elements."

He had perforce to say the word "aeroplane" in English, but he motioned towards *The Silver Link* to show the ice dwarf to what he referred.

The man nodded agreement, and he and his companions stood by while the two flyers sheeted up the plane to protect it in some measure from the snow and wind.

Then, consumed with curiosity, the explorers permitted their strangely gentle captors to lead them towards the snow hummocks.

They had gone half-way when a hoarse yell sounded from the rear and a wildly gesticulating figure stumbled towards them.

So Frampton and Heddle met the stowaway whom they had carried with them over some thousands of miles of frozen desolation.

"Where on earth did you spring from?" demanded Dr. James Heddle, eyeing the shabby figure of Goldoni through his pince-nez. "Stowaway, I suppose?"

The American's shifty eyes roved around the group of ice dwarfs and back to the two Englishmen. But he didn't meet their level gaze.

"Don't be hard on a guy," he whined.

"Guess I've had a tough break. I'm just an honest-to-goodness gold digger, but I was broke an'—well, guess I jumped yore plane for a ticket-free trip back South. I never figured you'd go farther North, Mister. Anyway, I got out for a leg-stretch at the other side of the plane when you landed here, an' hearin' these people collarin' you I thought I'd better horn in and give you a hand."

The fat little air pilot was scowling at the gunman ferociously. He knew well enough that the fellow lied. It was fear of being left alone in the Arctic wastes that had caused him to show himself.

But Dr. Jimmy Heddle eyed Goldoni as emotionlessly as he would one of his geological specimens.

"H'm, I'm sorry we brought you so far off the beaten track," he murmured. "But I'm afraid these gentlemen will make you come with us now whether you want to or not."

The ice dwarfs, who had been growing impatient, urged their captives forward again—and Hank Goldoni went, too.

When they reached the ice hummocks a surprise awaited them. For they were ushered on to a large metal platform on the surface of the ice. There was a switchboard at one end and, squatting before it, the leader of the dwarfs pulled a lever. Next moment the platform began to sink into the solid ice, with Goldoni, the two flyers, and all their queer captors aboard it.

Down, down, at ever-increasing speed went that strange Polar lift, traversing a well-like shaft that seemed to lead into the very bowels of the Earth. Heddle noticed that the walls past which they slid were also of

Prisoners in the Ice Metropolis

the same metal as the platform on which they stood. As they progressed it became warmer and warmer.

They stopped at last, and the three were led forward—through an opening in the bottom of the shaft.

Exclamations of astonishment burst from their lips at what they saw. They were standing in a roadway paved with metal. On each side multi-windowed skyscrapers towered. Above these they glimpsed a great domed roof, so vast and distant that it might have been the sky itself.

And suspended from this artificial firmament was a huge globe, from which gleamed a soft, yellow light more soothing to the eyes than sunshine.

"Probably neon gas electrically disturbed," murmured Dr. Heddle.

His interested gaze rested on a number of flying machines, innocent of propellers, which cruised about in the air. One was hovering before a window of a building nearby, and one of the ice dwarfs was stepping into it. He seated himself behind the pilot, who flew off down the street.

Heddle also noticed an almost entire absence of sound in this world below the ice. The flying machines and the various vehicles on the roadway were absolutely silent. They probably drew their power

a bird," he told the American quietly. "There is only human life in Metrovia. But I can answer you for this bird. None of you will ever see the upper world again."

★ THE MENACE OF THE GLOOGS

"SAY, lemme tell yuh—"

"Now look here—"

Dr. Jimmy Heddle's voice, smooth as glass, hard as iron, cut into his companion's exclamations.

"And why will you not allow us to go back to our 'plane, my dear sir? As you can see, we are quite harmless."

The Metrovian looked at the tall, wiry geologist.

"I like you," he said simply. "And though I know you would not wittingly harm my people, yet I cannot let you return to the outer world. You will be happy with us. There is every material comfort a man can desire in Metrovia. We work only for a short time every day; all the heavy labour is done by machinery, electrically operated. We have every pleasure device of the upper world such as the Talkies, Wireless, Television, Speedplane Racing—and many others your world hasn't invented. The air we breathe

He smiled at his listeners.

"No doubt you will have noticed that it is more difficult to walk about down here than it is in the Old World. That is because the force of gravity—really an electrical phenomenon—is conducted by that iron ore from the Earth's centre. We have harnessed the power, converting it into commercial electricity. It makes life for us very, very pleasant, my friends."

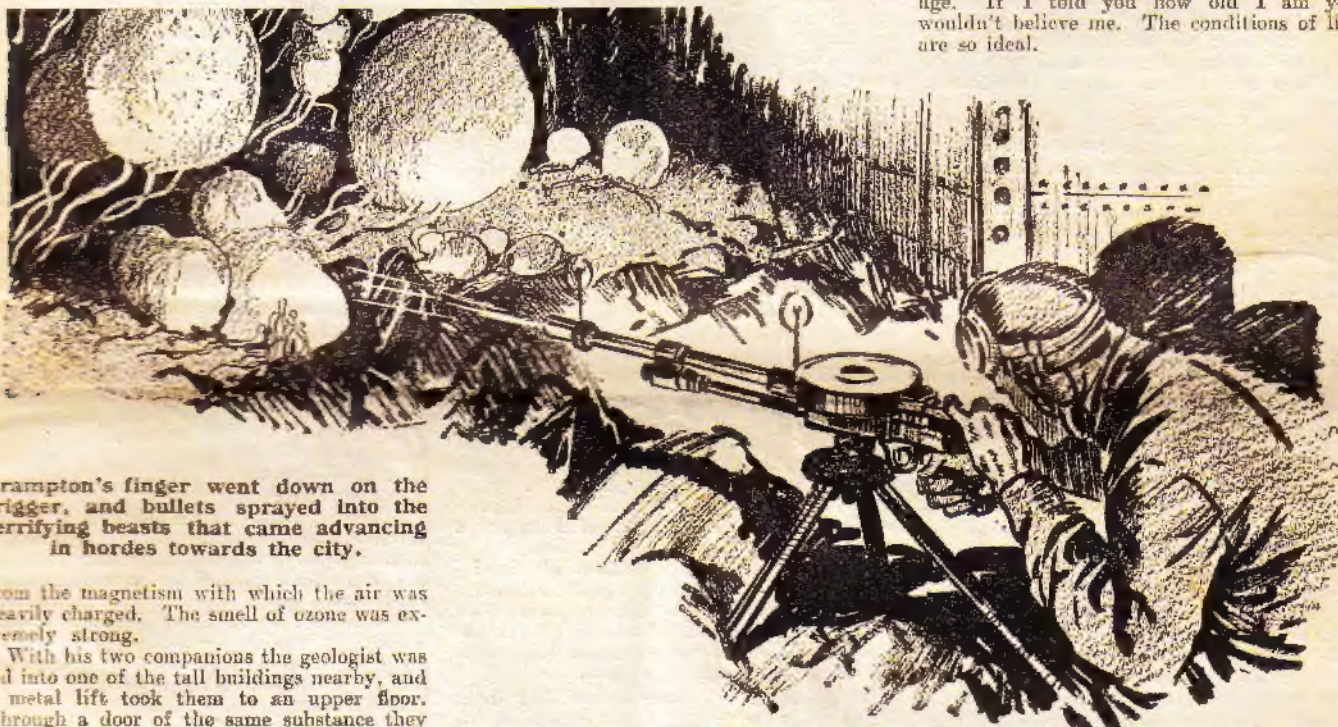
Before he could say any more Dr. Heddle broke in again excitedly.

"My own theory on the Magnetic North. This proves it up to the hilt! Oh, won't Professor Morratt look sick when I drop this little bombshell at the R.G.S. I—"

He paused and the eagerness died out of his voice as he went on. "Oh, yes, of course. I had forgotten. We are not to be allowed to return to the World. But why—er—Anklogh? The news about this place would be a nine days' wonder. And think of the invalids we could cure by sending them here!"

But the old Metrovian leader shook his head.

"I am sorry about your invalids," he said in his kindly voice. "But I'm afraid nothing can be done for them. Because we just haven't room for any increase in the population. People live down here to a great age. If I told you how old I am you wouldn't believe me. The conditions of life are so ideal."



Frampton's finger went down on the trigger, and bullets sprayed into the terrifying beasts that came advancing in hordes towards the city.

from the magnetism with which the air was heavily charged. The smell of ozone was extremely strong.

With his two companions the geologist was led into one of the tall buildings nearby, and a metal lift took them to an upper floor. Through a door of the same substance they went—to enter a vast, queerly-furnished room.

At a low desk a frail little man, with features similar to those of their captors, sat writing. He looked up as the party filed in, and the leader of the ice dwarfs explained the presence of the three strangers.

"Greetings, Anklogh, ruler of Metrovia. We found these three men on the outer ice. They came from the old world in a flying machine."

"Indeed!"

Anklogh put down his pen, and motioned Heddle, Frampton and Goldoni into three strange, metal chairs.

"Sit down, my friends."

The ice dwarfs filed out of the room leaving the two Britons and the American alone with their ruler. The last named showed no fear of the strangers.

It was Hank Goldoni who broke the silence.

"Say, Mister," he said to Dr. Heddle. "Ask this bird if he's going to let us go. This dive gives me the willies!"

To the amazement of all three the Metrovian ruler answered Hank—in English.

"I do not understand your reference to

is pumped down from the ice-fields above, and as you know, the Arctic air is quite free from germs."

Dr. Heddle interposed a question here. His eyes were gleaming behind his pince-nez. He had forgotten in his scientific zeal that he and the other two were virtually prisoners.

"Tell me, how did you or your ancestors get here? And how do you make the electricity you need for all this?"

Anklogh shrugged his frail shoulders.

"My ancestors were a band of ancient Tartars, as you will probably have guessed from the language my people speak. They came here from Russia—a mere handful of savants and thinkers who had been driven from the haunts of their fellows as necromancers, dealers in witchcraft and the black arts. By accident they stumbled on this cavern world—clearly of volcanic origin. And here they decided to make their home."

"As for the electricity, we don't need to manufacture it. It is here already—in greater quantities than we shall ever need. My forbears discovered that by a strange freak of Nature a vast streak of iron ore, nearly a mile in diameter, reached from the surface of the ice here to the Earth's core."

"But if the Old World got to know about Metrovia there would be an instant rush to—er—colonise us. Some covetous nation would probably wipe us out altogether. No, we know of the world, but the world must never know of us. We have the ideal state here, and come what may, I as the ruler mean to keep it so. . . . But you will be hungry. Permit me."

He brought a little black box from a drawer in his desk, and snapping open the lid invited each of his guests to take one of the diamond-shaped black lozenges it contained. They did so and popped them into their mouths.

Immediately they felt new life coursing through their veins. Whatever those lozenges contained, it had a highly concentrated nutritive value, and the taste, though not unpleasant, eluded anything they had ever eaten in the upper world.

After further conversation with the old Metrovian, in which he learnt their names and the mission that had brought Heddle and Frampton to the Arctic, the three strangely assorted companions sallied out into the streets of steel. No effort was made by the inhabitants of this wonder world to restrain

The Fight with the Ice Beasts

them in any way. They were accorded the same freedom to go where they pleased as were the Metrovians themselves.

Fresh wonders opened at every turn. They looked in at a huge steel factory where a handful of Metrovians were smelting iron ore in huge electrical furnaces. They went to see a talkie, but the air pilot and Goldoni, not understanding the language, soon tired of that.

The speedplane races in an open space beyond the network of skyscraper streets held them a little longer. And all the while they could only gauge the passing of time by their wrist-watches. That immense artificial sun, which seemed to cast its light over every part of the Underworld, never dimmed.

At last they had left the city behind, having traversed about four miles.

The ground hereabouts was all pitted and covered with towering crags of lava-rock. Heddle was passing one of the natural gullies in these miniature hills when he uttered a sudden exclamation of horror.

Heddle was facing a Thing that he had never imagined even in his wildest dreams. The Thing had just floated out of one of the side gullies that cut into the valley down which they were walking.

No pen can describe the strange Thing. Head and body were one—a great oval shape, and from the bottom of it tentacles hung and swayed as it floated in the air!

The foremost pair reached out with their tentacles to seize the geologist in their grip. And this action gave back to Heddle the power of his limbs.

He turned and fled back towards Metrovia with the awful Things in pursuit.

With him ran Ellis Frampton, but Goldoni had disappeared from sight. He was crouching, gibbering with fear, completely unmoved by what he had seen, behind the shelter of some lava-rocks.

How the two Englishmen gained the main street of the ice-world before the horrors behind them Heddle and Frampton never knew. But fear lent wings to their feet.

Yet there was no help for them from the human inhabitants of this nether world, screams and shouts of terror resounded on all sides, and the sidewalks emptied as though a giant hand had wiped them clean.

Panting, every breath an agony now, Frampton found himself at the end of his tether. In sheer desperation he halted and whipped out the heavy revolver he always carried in his belt.

The leading horror was very close. He had a vision of the monstrous egg-shaped body and the tentacles reaching out to seize him. And he thumbed the hammer of his gun—once, twice, thrice!

The crashing explosions seemed to re-echo from the vault high above. The heavy slugs smashed their message of death into the nightmare Thing, and the hideous creature collapsed with writhing tentacles.

Its companion did not wait to suffer the same fate. It turned and streaked back the way it had come, disappearing among the lava hillocks before Frampton could take aim.

★ THE DEFENCE OF ICE-METROPOLIS

DR. HEDDLE and his pilot stared at Anklogh's obvious terror in dumb astonishment.

"Yes, we call them the Gloogs," he replied in a shaking voice. "And at last the Gloogs have got through! Metrovia and everyone in it is—doomed. . ."

"Surely these Gloogs, as you call them, cannot do much harm to you here?" questioned the geologist wonderingly.

The Metrovian ruler looked at him strangely.

"They can, and they will. You forget that our civilisation down here has progressed to such a stage that we don't need weapons. There has been no need for them for hun-

dreds of years, and, save for a few rusty swords belonging to our ancestors, we have none of any kind."

"Good Heavens! And the Gloogs?"

"They are numerous enough to exterminate us. They were the ancient inhabitants of Metrovia in its natural state, of course. Our history books and old records tell how our Tartar forebears drove them into the lava caverns beyond Metrovia. A war followed, but when my ancestors were in danger of being destroyed by superior numbers Nature stepped in. There was a volcanic disturbance that shut off the Gloogs' territory from ours with tons of rock."

"But how have they got here now?" asked Heddle.

"Undoubtedly by tearing at the rock barrier with their tentacles. They may have been working at the task for centuries. Oh, fools that we were to blind ourselves to this awful contingency. What can save us all from destruction?"

And Anklogh showed an emotion that he and his people had forgotten for centuries.

Dr. Jimmy Heddle was the calmest of the trio. His face was set in a fighting mask as he dropped naturally into the position of leader.

"As I see it, those two horrors were the advance guard of the Gloogs. Probably they have torn not one but dozens of tunnels through the lava barrier for the invasion. We must prepare to meet them—and fight them. But there must be no panic. We have a couple of unmounted machine guns in our zeppelin. With your permission, Anklogh, Frampton here shall go and fetch them. Meanwhile, you must order all your engineers to try to barricade the tunnel exits."

And then the work began.

Silent before, Metrovia now became a city of the dead. Nothing moved in the streets except the electric lorries taking materials to the engineers who had been mustered at the lava barrier. Ellis Frampton, squatting before his machine-gun at the entrance to the big main highway, was the only human figure in sight.

Dr. Heddle had also disappeared. He had shut himself up in an electrical workshop in Metrovia. But he wasn't idle. He was working madly on the construction of a huge electric gun with which he planned to utilise the natural electrical resources of the Underworld to repel the invasion—if Frampton's machine-gun failed.

Frampton was the first hero of the invasion. He had been at his post for twenty-four hours, sustained by the Metrovian food lozenges. As he smoked one of his few remaining cigarettes he wondered idly what had happened to Hank Goldoni.

Supposing the American to have been killed when the Gloogs first appeared at the rock barrier, they had made a search for his body. But it had not been found. Frampton shuddered as he thought what might have happened to him. True, he had never trusted the man, but —

His thoughts were interrupted by a sudden uproar coming from the direction of the rock barrier.

From the direction of the lava rocks came a swarm of monstrous, tentacled figures. The Gloogs had broken through, slaughtering the Metrovian engineers who had been unable to block up the tunnel exits in time.

In a solid phalanx the slimy invaders came towards the entrance to the city. Tentacles curled round fleeing men, choking and crushing them.

Frampton waited until the Gloogs were within a hundred yards.

Then the rat-tat-tat of his machine gun smashed the silence. Bullets sprayed into the horrific creatures as he swung the squat barrel of his weapon to and fro. They were mown down like thistles, until a huge pile of their grotesque bodies was heaped in front of the gun. And though more took their places, they obviously couldn't get out

of the tunnels quickly enough to overwhelm the lone figure at the machine gun.

But Frampton's ammunition wouldn't last for ever. He was using the last drum when there came an amazing interruption.

As though impelled by some command, they ceased to float forward, and retreated back to their tunnels.

A respite before a new attack, thought Frampton. Madly he squeezed his gun trips—but only a dull click answered him. The magazine was empty!

He cast the useless gun from him and hurried back through the deserted main street until he reached the skyscraper that housed Anklogh's private scientific workshops. He knew he would find Dr. Heddle here.

The geologist was working in a room at the top of the high steel building, mounting a weird cylinder before one of the windows.

"Ellis!" he greeted the pilot, as Frampton came in. "We've done it. This electric gun will wipe out the Gloogs until further notice—if it works."

"Well, it's to be hoped it does," answered Frampton, dryly. "For the ammunition is finished."

Then he pointed with a shaking finger through the big window.

"They're coming! The Gloogs!" he quavered. "Look, Professor, millions of 'em!"

Eyes gleaming behind his pince-nez, Dr. Heddle jumped to the window and peered down the street of skyscrapers.

He saw the massed horrors floating into the city.

Calmly he turned away, and swinging the strange shaped cylinder of his electric gun, aligned it on the advancing hordes.

"Now we shall see!" he murmured, and pulled a switch-lever among the great coils of wire below the strange weapon.

The result was amazing, devastating. Great, forked tongues of electric fire crackled from the end of the cylinder. Across the space separating them from the Gloogs it stabbed, and, as the electric rays impinged on them, the weird horrors shrivelled and collapsed like pricked balloons.

At last not one of the Gloogs was left in sight, and as fast as new-comers appeared from the tunnels the lightning gun shrivelled them into carbon.

But the climax was still to come.

Suddenly, from the direction of the lava barrier, there came a deep, reverberating roar. Clouds of sulphur smoke billowed into the city, accompanied by a subterranean rumbling.

"Good heavens! An earthquake!" said Heddle. "The electric discharges must have disturbed the ancient volcano under the Gloogs' territory! I'm afraid this will be fatal for those that are left!"

* * * * *

DR. JIMMY HEDDLE and Ellis Frampton were the heroes of Metrovia.

A public ceremony was inaugurated to accord them the city's grateful thanks for defeating the dreaded invaders. It had been discovered that the volcanic disturbance had blocked up the tunnels the Gloogs had torn through the barrier.

What had happened to Hank Goldoni, whether or not he was imprisoned alive beyond the lava barrier, will never be known.

No trace of his body was ever found.

So grateful was the Metrovian ruler that he offered the two Britons anything they wished as a reward. Of course, Heddle asked that they should be allowed to return to the upper earth, and civilisation as they knew it.

And, after they had promised to keep the location of Metrovia a secret, Anklogh agreed.

Dr. Jimmy Heddle and Ellis Frampton are now in Abyssinia, where the former is gaining material for his new theory of fossil remains.

And Professor Morrant still pool-pools Heddle's theory of the Magnetic North.



Knives gleamed in the misty blue as the salvage men fought like maniacs one thousand feet below the surface.

DEATH DIVE

★ ROBBERY ON THE HIGH SEAS

THE Trans-Oceanic liner *Commodore* cut the Atlantic swell at an even fifty-five knots.

Deep down in her hull skilled engineers kept a watchful eye on her batteries of turbines.

Up in her wheel-house the officers of the watch made sure that the Trans-Oceanic Navigation Company's crack vessel kept to course and schedule.

Schedule—that was more important. For with four millions in bullion in her strong-room, even an hour late would cost a small fortune in loss in interest.

Night had fallen two hours previously. Twenty-four hours back the *Commodore* had left the Statue of Liberty astern; now she was within a couple of hundred miles of the Irish coast.

Nothing untoward had upset the routine of the voyage. Meals were being served in First and Tourist dining halls; passengers sipped cocktails at the Davy Jones Bar; somewhere on the promenade deck a band was playing, and couples danced in the soft light of fairy lamps.

All was well . . . and the *Commodore* would berth at Southampton to schedule.

But things were happening aboard the liner—little things that were soon to swell to the dimension of front-page news.

The Chief Officer was on duty in the wheel-house, together with two other officers and the chief wireless operator.

"Sparks" looked up suddenly from the impressive control panel of the transmitter:

"Can you please check our position, sir; directional signals appear to be fading."

The *Commodore* had set the lead in robot steering. The idea had been borrowed from aviation. The port of destination sent out low-wave radio signals at five-minute intervals. Similar signals were transmitted from the Hebrides and Spain.

**IT WAS SINISTER Salvage.
Men Fought Men in the Misty
Depths two hundred Fathoms
down. And Gold—gleaming
yellow bars—was the Prize**

Delicate apparatus aboard the liner recorded the strength of the reception from the three different directions, and so long as Southampton recorded maximum, and Hebrides and Barcelona were correspondingly faint, the liner was on its true course.

A falling away in the Southampton signal strength would mean an increase from one or other of the alternatives, thus showing whether the liner had veered to port or starb'd.

And now "Sparks" was concerned to see that, according to the directional signals, the liner was considerably to port of its destination.

The officer hastily glanced at his compass. He looked up in amazement. "D'you say we've veered to port?" he asked.

"That's right, sir. Hebrides signal is rapidly growing in volume."

"Something seriously wrong, somewhere. Compass shows we're swinging to starb'd." He turned to a junior officer: "Better get the Old Man up here. . . ."

The Commander was dining in the saloon with the first-class passengers. On the deck beneath, leading from the captain's suite, was the ship's strong-room. In view of the four millions of gold blocks stored behind the steel doors, an officer and two men had been detailed to guard the contents. The guard was changed every four hours.

The two seamen sat playing cards at a small portable table they had erected outside the strong-room door. The officer strolled slowly up and down the corridor, the revolver in his tunic pocket making an inconspicuous bulge in his well-cut uniform.

There was the sound of hurried footsteps approaching the corridor. The officer stopped in his stride and waited, tensed. . . . A smartly-dressed man came towards him, obviously a passenger.

"Ah, officer—can you direct me to "B" Deck? I always seem to be losing my way in this confounded boat. If they make 'em much bigger they'll have to employ policemen. Ha! ha!"

He laughed good-naturedly. "If you'll go back along this corridor, sir, and—"

The passenger, preparing to light a cigar—

The "Commodore"—and her Secret—Go Down

ette, dropped his gold cigarette case to the floor. He stooped to pick it up, but the officer was before him.

"Allow me, sir, . . ."

He bent, and—before he could straighten up—the passenger struck him a ruthless blow on the back of the skull with a short length of lead piping. The officer sprawled on his face with a long-drawn-out sigh.

The passenger eyed the unconscious man for a moment, then he slipped the piping back into his pocket. He whistled softly, and two others hurried along the corridor.

"Got to hurry!" grunted the passenger. "Sling this fellow into that cabin there—he won't be found!"

He laughed, and it wasn't pleasant to hear.

One of the seamen outside the strong-room must have heard the murmur of conversation.

He opened the door with an "Everything O.K. sir?" Then he saw the passenger outside, and the two others carrying the unconscious officer into the opposite cabin. He started to shout something, and his voice died to an unintelligible burble of sound as a bullet burst in his brain. He slumped backwards into the arms of his astonished mate.

That was why the latter could not so much as raise a hand to defend himself as the lead piping crashed down on his unprotected skull.

The passenger grunted with satisfaction.

"O.K. We'll get busy, . . ."

The three of them roughly lifted the two seamen aside. One of them darted back to a neighbouring cabin and reappeared with a compact oxy-acetylene kit.

Heinrich, the big man who had first appeared on the scene, bent down by the strong-room door. He opened the cock of the cylinder, adjusted the jet, and brought his glowing cigarette to the gas. A blue flame hissed against the steel of the door.

The two guards lay lifeless on the floor. Heinrich, with protective goggles covering his eyes, knelt at the strong-room door, his head buried in a shower of flying sparks as the flame bit into the steel. His two accomplices bent forward in tense expectation. Heinrich looked up for an instant:

"Don't stand around doing nothing! You, Potter, get up on the bridge deck and try to find out what's happening in the wheel-house. You'd better hang around the door, Hemp. If anybody gets inquisitive you know how to cure him!"

He turned back to the job of cutting away the combination lock.

Twenty minutes later there was a pop as Heinrich extinguished the flame. He thrust the acetylene kit aside and swung open the strong-room door. He glanced at his watch.

"Right—to the minute!" he grunted with satisfaction.

Potter came back:

"O.K. Should happen any moment now!"

Up in the wheel-house the officers of the watch were facing grim tragedy.

The Commander had been called immediately the conflicting evidence of compass and directional steering apparatus had been discovered. "Sparks" had been making desperate efforts to confirm their true position by radio. The Captain and Chief Officer were bent over a pad working at intricate calculations . . . and it was the latter method that revealed their position in all its grim possibilities.

The commander suddenly dropped the pencil and reeled to his feet.

"Full speed astern!" he screamed; "we're almost on the Burgen Reef!"

The rhythmic rumble of the turbines gradually slowed and then increased in speed. A maelstrom of whiteness appeared at the stern as the triple screws tried to force the huge hull into reverse.

Then there was a sudden grinding shock that staggered the whole hundred thousand

tons of the *Commodore*; that sent dining tables and diners crashing to start'd in a broken heap.

The emergency bells pealed the call to boat-stations. "Sparks" flung his broken chair aside and crouched over the transmitter.

Frightened passengers commenced to stream up on to the boat-deck, the hoarse shouts of men mingling with the screaming of panic-stricken women and the staccato orders of the officers.

A dozen grease-smeared men in blue overalls tumbled up from the engine-room, and the chief engineer informed the wheel-house in curt tones that there was seven feet of water in the hold and more coming in fast.

The commander turned to the waiting officers.

"Give the order to lower away the boats—and there must be no panic." He turned to the Chief Officer: "My place is on the bridge. Get down to the strong-room; take a couple of men with you. Get the bullion up and into No. 4 boat."

The Chief saluted smartly and hurried away.

He fought his way past those of the passengers and crew who, having stopped to pack a few of their possessions—now rushed madly up on deck. He hurried down the corridor to the strong-room, the two seamen at his heels.

He flung open the outer door, then staggered back with half-choked cry as he saw the great steel door swung open: the gaping hole where the combination lock had been; the motionless bodies huddled on the floor. Then he leapt to action:

"Get these men into the boats—I'll report to the Commander!"

He rushed back into the corridor to make his way up to the wheel-house. Then the floor sagged as the sinking liner heeled sickeningly.

His hands outflung, struggling to retain his balance, he was snatched up by the black wall of water that hurtled down the corridor.

There was an instant's glimpse of the bodies of the officer and his men as they were flung up on the crest, then the in-rushing torrent had flung itself at the end of the corridor and crashed through.

An hour later, out in No. 4 boat, the Commander sat crouched in the stern. The *Commodore* had made her last plunge a few minutes before. The Second Officer broke in on his reverie.

"Better pull to the south a bit, hadn't we, sir? Better chance of getting picked up."

"The captain looked up with a start.

"We're staying here till we're picked up," he almost snarled. "They've got to get the position of the *Commodore*, and if we move from here they may have to drag for months."

" . . ."

Somewhere out in the darkness to the east a fast motor-launch with four occupants was making for the Irish coast. The craft was low in the water, so low that an occasional wave broke over her.

She was carrying a heavier cargo than her builders had intended, but then, she had cost only a couple of hundred pounds, whereas now, as she ploughed swiftly through the Atlantic swell, her builders couldn't have bought her back for less than two million. . . .

The Second Officer spoke again.

"But surely they won't try to raise the *Commodore*, sir?"

The Commander looked up with a frown.

"*Commodore* be hanged! There's four million in bullion down in her strong-room! And you can bet they'll drain the Atlantic before they let that little lot go to Davy Jones!"

★ SINISTER SALVAGE

THE General Salvage Corporation got the job.

They located the sunken liner a week later,

lying on her side at the base of the Burgen Reef, in two hundred fathoms of water.

"Crab" Browning was in command of the outfit—they called him "Crab" because, before he'd got a tough dose of the "bends," he'd spent more time on the sea bed than any other man living. He knew all there was to know about salvage, did Crab—and he hadn't got his knowledge from books!

He turned to the steward who was just leaving his cabin.

"Send Mr. Harper along to me."

Jim Harper, the "General's" crack diver, was not long in answering the summons. He had the broad chest, the huge limbs, the square shoulders of a man accustomed to withstanding the terrific pressures of undersea work. And he was young . . . still in his early twenties.

"Sit down, Jim," Crab smiled, motioning the other to a chair. "Just had the report from Harris. The old *Commodore* is on her side at about two hundred fathoms. He reports she's on a rock bottom, so I reckon that means there won't be any spade work. Here's the builders' plans of the boat; I've marked the strong-room with a cross. . . ."

Together they bent over the plans, working out the best route to take in getting at the sunken gold.

"We'll get busy in the morning," Crab finished up. "Looks like everything's going to be plain sailing on this job. . . ."

At sun-up next morning the deck of the salvage ship *Hercules* was a hive of industry.

Jim was in charge of the Undersea squad—the men who would do all their work on the ocean bottom.

Climbing into the steel-alloy diving suit he reflected that salvage work had made some strides in the past fifty years. Those guys who used to work at twenty fathoms for a couple of hours, with just a length of air hose separating them from death, must have had a bit of nerve. . . .

Provided one had the constitution to withstand the conditions prevailing hundreds of feet beneath the surface, there wasn't much in it.

The new light steel-alloy suits were made to withstand terrific pressures; the compact oxygen cylinders strapped to the back dispensed with the vulnerable air-lines. Even ropes connecting the diver to the vessel above were unnecessary, leaving the undersea worker free to roam about a sunken wreck without fear of being caught up.

Jim was the first man on the scene of the wreck. The powerful electric lamp fitted to his head-gear illuminated the water for a yard or so around him.

Occasionally a fish would dart at the front plate of his helmet, attracted by the light. He dropped to the sea-bed and, still keeping the lowering rope attached to his harness, spoke into his wireless transmitter.

"O.K. I'm down. Better lower the arcs and a couple of men to help assemble."

He waited for a few minutes, until the big steel tripods upon which were fixed the powerful arc-lamps came down out of the blackness above.

Within half an hour the lamps were in place, and the sea-bed for hundreds of yards around was thrown into the light of day.

Jim turned to see the huge hull of the sunken liner lying on its side quite close. It reared above him like a towering wall of steel, and he realised that his climb up on to the deck would involve all the hazards of mountaineering.

Now the salvage work went rapidly ahead. More divers descended, and now that there was no fear of being lost on the sea-bed in the brilliant light of the lamps, the lowering ropes were detached and left to sway ghost-like from the *Hercules* above.

The earlier difficulties of under-sea communication had been solved during the past few months. Three-way radio communication was in operation. Jim, for instance, could speak to the deck of the salvage ship direct; and the salvage ship could speak

Death waits at 200 Fathoms

to him. And if he wished to speak to any one of the divers working beside him, he merely had to request the operator above to plug him through.

Down there on the ocean-bed, over a thousand feet beneath the surface, they erected derricks and a store hut. They created another world, breathing air from the cylinders on their backs, deriving light from the powerful arc-lamps.

With Jim in the lead, and the four other divers swaying grotesquely at his heels, the party set off on an initial tour of inspection.

They walked over half a mile before they had encircled the liner, and Jim realised that, by means of a steady rope, he would be able to climb the uppermost side of the hull. He spoke into his transmitter.

"Hallo, *Hercules*. Lower harpoon gun."

As it came down to them at the end of a rope it looked like a cross between an old-fashioned blunderbuss and a machine-gun. From the barrel protruded a miniature anchor, and a coil of rope ran from the end of this to the drum under the butt.

Jim stepped back a few paces, and then levelled the barrel. He pressed the trigger. A patch of water in the neighbourhood of the gun foamed, and then the anchor—trailing the rope behind—could be glimpsed stabbing up through the water until it dropped across the *Commodore's* upper-works.

Jim drew in the slack of the rope until a sudden tautness told him that the anchor had found a hold.

He spoke into the transmitter again.

"O.K., *Hercules*. Climbing rope's in position; going up on deck with a couple of others. Tell Roberts and White to follow. Tell the other two to remain as they are, keeping the rope taut."

Jim went up first. He'd done a bit of climbing amongst the Derbyshire peaks, but he'd never tried anything quite like this. His leaden soles had only the small projections formed by the riveted plates. The hull was slippery and, but for the rope to save him, he would have plunged headlong to the rock floor below.

It took him nearly ten minutes to climb to the level of the promenade deck—a hundred feet of strenuous effort that brought streams of perspiration pouring down his cheeks.

He swung himself on to the deck, looked down to see that the other two men were coming up from below, and then, with his helmet lamp throwing a faint light ahead, started to make his perilous way along the steeply canted planking.

Jim had carefully memorised the essential parts of the liner's lay-out, and now he was groping his way along to the main staircase that led down to "D" deck.

Suddenly, in the blackness ahead, he saw



The Chief Officer staggered back with a half-choked cry as he saw the motionless bodies huddled on the floor of the strong-room.



a light glimmer. He stopped dead in his tracks, wondering if his eyes were playing him false. Then the light vanished.

It looked for all the world like the light from another diver's helmet. But the other two were still climbing the hull. The remaining two were keeping the rope taut at the keel, and the other undersea workers were concentrated on installing the equipment that was being lowered from the *Hercules*. Probably some deep-sea fish, he assured himself.

Perhaps a port-hole glass swaying in the slight swell . . . reflecting the light from the arc-lamps. That was probably the solution. . . .

Nevertheless, the thought persisted. Supposing somebody else was making a bid for the *Commodore's* gold?

No—that was absurd! They'd have to have a salvage vessel on the surface, and the *Hercules* had at least a couple of hundred square miles of ocean to herself. Suspicion still gnawed at his mind. Anyway, he told himself, it wouldn't do any harm to have a look round.

Jim went forward until he reached the spot where he judged he had seen the light. He found himself at a spot where a corridor went across to the port side. He moved in that direction, came to the port rail, looked down from where it reared out over the seabed. . . .

It was pitch-black. The port-side of the liner was in the deep shadow of the arc-lamps concentrated to starboard. He was turning to retrace his steps when something aroused his curiosity . . . something that looked strangely like the harpoon he had recently fired. It was—and it wasn't!

It was a harpoon all right—he could see the rope dangling beneath. But it wasn't the one he had fired! That was fixed in the upper-works on the starboard side. It meant that somebody else had come aboard: somebody else after the gold. . . . But how? . . .

He made his way back to where the two

others stood waiting for him by the rail. At first he was tempted to speak into the transmitter, informing the *Hercules* of his discovery.

And then he thought that it might be wiser to keep his information for Crab's private ear. If this other man was one of the crew, then there might be others. Anyway, it was no good staying up on deck any longer. Tomorrow they'd get the oxy-acetylene apparatus up on top, and run the gas-line down to the strong-room.

Jim motioned to the others to precede him down the rope. He hung back, hoping to catch a further glimpse of that mysterious light. He saw nothing. He looked down to see the other two divers almost at the bottom, and swung himself over the side.

Clinging tightly to the rope, he started to lower himself; whenever his feet slipped his hands saved him. There could be only one ending if he missed his hold . . . slithering down the steep side of the hull at ever-increasing speed . . . until he hit the rock floor below!

He hadn't gone more than ten feet when something made him look up. Above his head, bending over the rail, he saw the helmet of another diver. He started to climb up, then the flash of steel glinted for a moment in the light of his head-lamp. He was cutting the rope! . . .

No time to climb back to the deck . . . death below. Jim had to act quickly. He saw the studded edge of a port-hole a yard to the left of him. With desperate energy he swung himself sideways, releasing his hold on the rope.

His fingers found the rough edge of the port and gripped. Dazedly, he saw the rope snaking through the water down to the bed below. He flung a glance upwards, and saw the diver had vanished.

They got him down twenty minutes later, his fingers torn and numb. . . .

★THE BATTLE IN THE DEPTHS

"I'm telling you, Crab, there's queer things happening down there," said Jim urgently. They were sitting in the captain's cabin an hour later. "At first I thought I

Grim Battle on the Sea Bed

was seeing things; but when that chap was sawing away at that rope I knew that this job wasn't going to be such plain sailing as you said. See here, Crab, we've got to find out what's happening . . . before somebody gets hurt!"

The captain smiled reassuringly.

"That's all right, kid." He lowered his voice: "As a matter of fact, I expected something of the kind. That guy who calls himself Smythies, and who is supposed to represent the insurance company, I happen to know he's a Yard man. He took me into his confidence, and—since I know you—I reckon I can let it go a trip further."

"You see, apparently Smythies—or whatever his real name may be—was tipped the wink that the sinking of the old *Commodore* wasn't quite such a bad piece of luck as the public imagine. Those of the officers who survived swear that something went wrong with the steering, that it must have been tampered with. . . ."

The youngster gaped his amazement.

"You mean somebody scuttled her!"

"Just that," Crab said slowly.

"It don't make sense," Jim said at last. "It wasn't as if she was an old tramp covered up to her smoke-stacks with heavy insurances. It wouldn't do anybody any good to sink the *Commodore*. It wasn't as if she was carrying ammunition for a foreign power, or—"

"—Gold," the captain interjected.

The youngster's mouth opened and closed. At last he blurted: "Tell me, Crab—am I crazy or are you? Who would want to send four millions in gold bullion to the bottom? Answer me that!"

Crab's eyes twinkled.

"You've got it all wrong, kid. When a man murders another he usually tries to conceal the body; when a thief snatches a bag he doesn't keep the bag—too dangerous! Smythies—the Yard man—has got an idea that's why the *Commodore* went to the bottom. And—if he's right—there won't be any gold in the strong-room safe when you reach it! . . ."

"Then why all this bother to . . .?"

"You can't convict a man on theories. The police have all sorts of queer sources of information, so Smythies tells me. There's as much gossip in the underworld as at a mothers' sewing class. Apparently there have been whispers of a gang known to the police having gold for sale; and investigation hasn't helped to account for their movements at the time the *Commodore* went down. The Yard has a pretty sound idea that these crooks have got the gold, though they haven't been able to trace it yet. But the whole point is: they can't move until they've found out whether or not the *Commodore's* bullion has been stolen. That's why we're on the job. . . ."

"And what about that chap who was snooping around the deck—?"

"One of the gang, you bet. Probably working as one of our divers. He's out to prevent our having a look at that strong-room. Anyway, I'll give Smythies the tip, and he'll probably have a quiet comb-out of those of the crew I can't vouch for. Meantime . . . you've got to get into the strong-room!"

It was later that evening, when Jim was passing the door of the wireless room, that he heard a voice within. Something about it brought him to a halt.

Half-ashamedly he crouched outside so that his ear was level with the key-hole. He caught a low: "O.K., Boss!" and nothing more.

He heard a chair slide back, and he was looking unconcernedly out to sea—leaning over the rail—when the door opened and Pentelow came out.

Jim, watching him out of the corner of his eye, never moved. He heard the man walking briskly along the deck, and a few minutes later Parker, the regular wireless operator, came along.

"Just been along for a wash," he ex-

plained. "One of the Undersea Squad—Pentelow's his name—offered to keep an eye on the receiver whilst I was away. Rather decent of him, I thought."

"Sure," Jim agreed, making a mental note to keep a watchful eye on Pentelow. That "O.K., Boss," sounded very much as if the diver had snatched at the opportunity to communicate with somebody ashore.

Jim was down early next morning. Crab had given him the tip that the sooner he was inside that strong-room the happier Smythies would be.

The youngster decided that he wouldn't waste any time in getting inside the liner; he had anticipated delay in getting the oxy-acetylene outfit into operation . . . but it looked as if that wouldn't be necessary.

The rope that had rescued Jim on the previous day came in useful getting the divers up on to the boat-deck. Jim took six men with him, leaving Pentelow and a reliable man down at the keel.

He felt happier when Pentelow was not too close . . . so many accidents happen to a diver. . . .

With a couple of portable arc-lamps lighting their way, the divers walked along the deck and descended the steep main-staircase leading to all decks.

At "D" Deck Jim paused, then—remembering the details of the liner's blue-prints—turned left down the narrow corridor that led to the strong-room.

But even as Jim leaned heavily against the outer door, swung it open to see the hole in the huge safe . . . things were happening on the sea-bed outside.

Pentelow had been paying little attention to the rope. He was peering around nervously, as if expecting some monster of the deep to loom out of the surrounding blackness.

He was not disappointed. Suddenly the razor-edge bows of a small submarine were thrown into relief by the arc-lamps.

Pentelow acted quickly. From his belt he produced one of the new under-water guns. There was a slight disturbance in the water. His companion swayed for a moment, then slowly floated to a perpendicular position on the sea floor.

The submarine had come to a standstill on the verge of the darkness. A latch in her stern slowly opened, and a dozen men jumped to the floor and moved into position. Each man was dressed in a regulation diving-suit, with oxygen cylinder. But clasped in the hand of each was an under-water gun. Pentelow hastened across to join the gangsters.

It was then that Jim, followed by the other divers, reappeared high up on the promenade deck of the *Commodore*. The submarine, lying partly in the shadow, might have been mistaken for part of the rock floor . . . had anybody noticed it.

The first warning of anything untoward was when Graham started to spin round slowly like a top. And, as he turned, his legs began to sag . . . slowly, very slowly. . . . He dropped lightly to the deck, and started to slide down the sloping planking. Jim and another diver managed to grasp him, and it was then that the youngster saw the tell-tale hole in the metal suit . . . just above the heart.

Graham had been shot—shot down there . . . a thousand feet beneath the sea! As Jim straightened up, a black blotch appeared abruptly on the yellow planking of the deck . . . marking the spot where an under-water bullet had entered a split-second before.

Jim acted quickly. He spoke into the transmitter.

"Hallo, *Hercules*. Tell every man to lie flat on deck—urgent!"

One by one, as the message reached his companions from the operator above, Jim watched them drop face downwards. He spoke again.

"Hallo, *Hercules*. We're on the promenade deck, starboard side. Lower a bunch of under-water guns. . . and hurry!"

Whilst he waited for the guns Jim cautiously raised his head and searched the sea-

bed below . . . straining his eyes to detect the hidden sniper.

Then he detected a movement almost directly ahead, right on the verge of the blackness.

He stared at the spot, and gasped as he suddenly made out the details of the submarine. Holy smoke, if this was what old Crab called "plain sailing" . . .

He saw the body of the diver lying stretched on the sea-bed by the keel. He could guess where Pentelow was. . . .

Things began to happen after that. Out of the blackness above descended a weird something that at first glance looked like an octopus. Then, as it came into the radius of their helmet-lamps, they recognised it as a bundle of under-water guns. One of the divers got to his feet to reach for it.

"Get down, you fool!" Jim screamed into his transmitter . . . but only the operator above heard the words. Next moment the diver had slumped back with a bullet through the glass of his face-piece.

Jim spoke quietly to the *Hercules*, and the bundle of guns swung closer so that he was able to reach them without presenting too tempting a target.

He detached the weapons and, lying flat, passed them on to his companions. That was better!

Something stirred in the shadow ahead; Jim's gun spoke silently and the shadow moved no farther. Lying there, waiting for the next move, the youngster tried to discover the reason for the submarine. Then he remembered that "O.K. Boss!" of Pentelow's.

That was it—this was the crooks' desperate bid to prevent the *Hercules* from discovering the secret of the strong-room, or at any rate to prevent the divers from getting back to the salvage ship with their evidence.

The minutes passed and, other than occasional shots from the shadow of the submarine, there was nothing to disturb the stillness of the undersea.

But Heinrich knew that every second counted. Beckoning to a dozen of his men to follow him, he had backed into the darkness behind the submarine and cautiously made a half-circle until he came out on the port side of the liner. Pentelow had told him that the rope still hung from the rail . . . that they could shin up unnoticed and attack the salvage men in the rear.

That was how it happened. Jim, still lying flat with his eyes glued to the submarine, suddenly felt a spasmodic shudder run through the man lying beside him. With a lightning twist the youngster rolled over . . . and the bullet intended for him thudded into the deck six inches away. Then he was on his feet, beckoning to the others to follow him.

Dimly, in the light of their helmet-lamps, salvage men fought gangsters. At such close quarters the guns were almost useless, and the fight resolved into a hand-to-hand struggle. . . .

The gangsters, who had kept in the shadow of the submarine had no opportunity to launch their frontal attack. They had reckoned on picking off the salvage men with their rifles, a scheme that was obviously impracticable in hand-to-hand fighting.

One of the salvage men rolled down the deck with great air bubbles bursting from his broken oxygen pipe. The big figure of Heinrich loomed over Jim.

The youngster dropped to the deck and rolled over, sweeping the crook's feet from beneath him. Dimly through the darkness Jim saw him beckoning to those few of his accomplices who were left to follow him.

The gangsters were in retreat!

Jim thought quickly. They were obviously making back to join the others at the submarine. With only three of his own men left, he couldn't hope to hold out much longer. Jim spoke into his transmitter:

"Hallo, *Hercules*. This is urgent. Tell

(Read on at foot of next page)

A black and white illustration of a giant robot standing on a city rooftop. The robot is depicted in a dynamic, slightly off-balance pose, with its arms raised and fists clenched. It has a large, blocky head with a single visible eye and a wide, open mouth. Its body is composed of various mechanical segments, including a large chest plate and jointed limbs. The robot's feet are large and heavy. In the background, a city skyline is visible, featuring several tall buildings and a prominent dome. The sky is filled with stylized, swirling clouds. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-20th-century comic book art, with bold lines and a high-contrast, stippled texture.

and the mighty force of Nature
will bring about the end of
man.

BEFORE that time, according to Mr Papp, man will rise to undreamed of heights of glory and power. He will, indeed, be a lord of creation, and with the masterly skill of the man of the future will be his source of power—the brain.

Just as the man of today has outgrown the ape-like countenances of his primitive cave-dwelling ancestors, so will the man of the hundreds of years hence dispense with many of the features that are familiar to the present age.

Gradually, man will lose his hair, his teeth, and quite probably his ears. The little toe, too, is threatened with extinction.

To compensate him for these losses, we will develop some way to let present and future big boys take a little bit of his surroundings with them, so that they can be a part of the life of the community.

it was possible to destroy all the inhabitants of a large town, microscopic bacteria in liquid, from a distance of 500 miles.

These awful destruction was completed by means of powerful currents of electricity discharged without wire from a distance, which set the skyscrapers of an enemy metropolis on fire and converted the whole gloriously inferno into dust and ashes.

The automatic robbery, maneuvered by electricity, that were last employed against a rebellious mob at the close of the fortieth century, or even the narcotic gas which reduced hundreds of thousands of people in a hostelry to a state of coma, were benevolent agencies in comparison with the devastating death ray.

Nevertheless, this terrible instrument of death has proved the most faithful invention which ever sprang from the human mind. If we find it difficult to resist today that, out of fear of invasion, countries once encircled their frontiers with an inviolable wall of strong electric current, we owe our present safety not least to the scorching power of the death ray, to which these invisible walls are offered to check, and which rendered any conflict between warring nations suicidal.

The ray weapon is vented for purposes of murder and destruction, proven, to be the most effective protection against the horrors and fatalities of war.

WHAT was the end of man—the
beginning of creation?

We have _____ and
 _____ at _____

 _____ and _____

And still we live on . . . Will it be
and greatly war, in
one another
of

... with which the pacifists like to

... just "die off" become extinct
... historic monsters that once roared
... East and gradually lost the power to re-
... themselves?

After suggestion is put forward by a
 General writer, Dr. W. B. Papp, in a new book,

... law of species death, he declares

WITH this power will come new and undreamed of horrors. One of these will, undoubtedly, be the result of the explosion of a wave-sphere of the ether.

Thus resolved (relative Mr. Papp, writing in the *Letterpress*) in a gradual reaction to the death ray. The most terrible weapon ever placed at the service of man's desire for man is becoming a menace, ready with the disintegrating energies of the infernal rays.

No protective covering could resist their penetrating force. They could destroy any living thing sheltered behind the thickest steel plates in a few seconds.

By the efforts of a single relay, which released the rays at the source of energy,

BUT will all come to an end. Just as the prehistoric man first flourished and then gradually lost the power to reproduce his kind, so must man bow his head to the inexorable decrees of Nature.

The process of decay will take millions of years—as did in the case of prehistoric mountains—but the end of man is inevitable.

And after his examination other forms of life will come into being, flourish, and fade away.

Mr. Papp thinks that the insect world will be the next form of life on this earth. Yet they too must pass away.

The only form of life to witness the end of all things will be its terms—at once the highest and the lowest in the hierarchy of living things. They were the first living things on earth—they will also be the last.

And with this each of ours at last expires
in flames, as death will be meted by an alien
planet or a new and brighter falling star!

Crab to lower a boat and take a depth charge fifty yards out in a direct line from the stern of the *Heracles*. Tell him to gauge it for two hundred fathoms. Harry!

But on the deck again he watched the shadows of Heinrich and the survivors heading back to the submarine. He saw them rush into the interior, then the undersea craft moved forward until it was in the line of the arc lamps.

... something lifted into view. Jim
... recognised it as one of the new
... six inch guns built for ship-
... before

They were training it on the
back of the *Commodore*. They
brought them to the city. He saw
the gangster crouching behind the
saw him sending to
then did his little job of

up there on the surface, pitching about
the ship's boat. Crab dropped the depth-
gauge over the side with a grim smile.

Two hundred fathers lower the hull of the submarine suddenly angled like a inflated balloon . . . bulged until it burst asunder with a force that thrust the thousands of tons of encasing water aside.

Jim and the rest of the Undersea Squad to a firmer grip on the lower deck rail, and lunging grimly as the mass of water tried to tear them from their hold.

Five minutes later they were climbing down the hill of the *Comandore*. Scraps of torn metal, the supports of the awnings leaning over at a crazy angle . . . this was all that was left to testify to the fate of the gangsters.

Crab Browning had two guests at dinner in his kitchen this night. Jim was one of them, and James B. Harcourt, of the Commercial Investment Co. of New Bedford, was the other. Having finished one of the meals, the three of them sat down to a supper and a chat.

"Good work, youngsters!" commended the detective, turning to the boys.

"Two times," John said hesitantly. "I think."

you've got a few witnesses who are able to prove that the Commodore's strong room was half empty . . . but that doesn't find the rest of the buxom."

United States :

"Perhaps I should have taken both of you more completely into my confidence. I had a pretty good idea that things were going to happen down there on the bottom. You see, I've been a regular radio communication with the Earl all the time.

"I had my men watching every move of Heinrich and his crowd. They led the police to their god *crocks* on the Irish coast. Late last night I was informed that the *crocks* had boarded a submarine. It seemed pretty obvious that they were coming out to the *anniversary* to get the two million they had. I had time to grab when the liner went down."

" Ah," I nodded; " I'm beginning to get the idea."

"Sure!" Crab laughed; "it's an plain-sailing."

"You're taking me!"

With the Armies of the Moon he Challenged the Earth

MASTER

THE WORLD RALLIES to Fight the terrific Forces and the ghastly instruments of War from the Lunar globe



★ FIGHTING SCIENTIST COMES BACK

CAPTAIN NICK CHANCE, scientist and space adventurer, was trapped.

His space ship, *Meteor*, had been caught in the searchlight beams of the British anti-aircraft gunners on her return to Earth after incredible adventures in the void of space.

He had discovered that his enemy, Dr. Merian, Master of the Moon, had organised armed forces for the invasion of the Earth. American speedbomes with satellite craft that were even then hovering in the stratosphere, waiting to be launched on the Earth.

Captain Nick Chance had gone down under the sea with the *Meteor* in a last desperate effort to bluff his enemy, self-styled Master of the Moon, into believing that he was dead.

It was imperative that he should escape the all-seeing eyes of the master scientist. Even in his amazing visiscreen, Dr. Merian could not see him under the sea. He must believe him drowned for the British gunners had told the *Meteor* and ships with a Jacky shell, believing it to be a hostile craft.

And it seemed, indeed, that Captain Nick Chance could not escape a terrible death by drowning as the *Meteor* plunged down into the sea.

Behind him, as he stood in the control tower, he heard the thunderous torrent of rushing waters that poured down from forward.

The space scientist thought and acted—quickly.

Before the pressure of the booming water was too great he caught hold of the port house door and slammed it shut against the torrent.

Leaving his weight against it, he clamped the door in place one by one, while the water surged in through the fissures around the door. It submerged the batteries, and the lights flickered out. He was in total darkness and breathing hard.

The trapped space scientist quickly reviewed the situation. The pressure of water

was piling up against the steel door while the *Meteor* was slowly sinking. The vessel then filled up with horror. How far was it to the bottom?

If it were more than a hundred feet or so to the sea bed, the enormous pressure of water must inevitably burst in that steel door.

Then suddenly the *Meteor* stopped, bumped slightly and came to rest. She was on the bottom, but even so the terrific pressure of water against the steel bulkhead door caused it to groan ominously.

Captain Nick breathed with relief, and prayed that the door would hold. But the *Meteor* was doomed. Captain Nick gave himself a rough shake, and tried to think of some means of escape. The square hatch overhead—that was it! Captain Nick leapt up.

He was aware of the difficulty of forcing off that hatch with the powerful pressure of water outside. Nevertheless there were ways and means.

First he opened a valve, and the water came gushing in. Next he opened the cock of the compressed air generator and so forced a terrific pressure of air upwards as the water surged to his waist.

His head was dimming as he clambered up on to the steel covers of the generator and repulsive engines, with the tool box in his hands. He was going to force off the hatch and escape through its opening.

In the darkness he applied the wrench to the nuts and turned them one by one. His strength was about gone, and the water was up to his waist, despite his elevated position on the engines. Then the last nut loosened, and with feverish fingers he kicked the pins off. He pressed his shoulder against the hatch and lifted.

There was a talking hiss of air, and instantly he felt himself being shot up like a rocket through that trap where the water grew green and luminous around him.

When Captain Nick came back to consciousness he found himself trapped up in the bunk of the sub bay of a British destroyer.

The Captain of the ship told him he had

seen his body shoot out of the water and fall back on the surface. They had put out a boat and picked him up just in time.

By then the Moon fleet had landed, and consternation and chaos had spread throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain.

The captain was willing enough to listen to the scientist's story then—but it was almost too late.

The destroyer raced for port.

Whilst it did so Captain Nick paced the deck and talked to the captain. He seemed glad to unburden himself to someone.

"We must get to my laboratories," the space captain said in an agitated tone. "There is still enough Moon-metal there to make supplies of a deadly liquid fire. Enough left over from the construction of the *Invincible* to make this stuff."

"We could fit the liquid fire gun to a tank," he went on, pacing up and down, and punctuating his remarks with short taps at his beard.

"You see, Captain," he explained to the Naval officer, "this Moon-metal is most wonderful stuff. I got it from the Moon pools in the Abyssinian mountains. I don't know all its properties yet. Amazing radio-active metal."

"Incandescent, it makes this powerful liquid fire, which will melt most metals. This Moon-metal was actually the basic principle behind the space ship's engines. The explosive and impulsive engines, I mean. When in motion, the Moon-metal threw off so-called gravity; thus the ship was able to shoot from either the Earth or the Moon into space. When stilled in the engines, it had water we call the impulsive urge. That is to say it answered to the pull of either Moon or Earth. It drove a screw, too, to feed for Diesel engines on the water."

Why he should tell all this to the captain of the destroyer the space adventurer did not know. But he was following his own train of thoughts. And suddenly, look of tense anxiety crossed his face.

Even if we repel the invasion from the Moon, he muttered aloud, tugging at his

of the MOON

heard, "we have still to quieten the seas of Moon metal on the Moon which that fiend, Dr. Mehan, has set in motion. It is drawing the Moon towards the Earth. The only way is to smash the Halls of Machinery on the Moon. Yes, that is the only way."

Fuming and fretting, though he was, the bearded space adventurer faced himself to patience until the destroyer sighted Dover.

By that time, however, the captain had become busy. Impressed by Captain Nick's story, he had broadcast radio messages, and a motor launch containing important War Office officials put out to meet the destroyer.

"The Moonmen have landed on Salisbury Plain," he said in tragic tones. "Our armies are in the field, but are powerless to stem the tide. Gentlemen, this is the grave position we have to consider."

There were tense, startled intakes of breath.

Everyone was silent, acutely alert, as if listening for the drone and hum of the avenging machines from the Moon.

Too late they realised the tragic blunder that had been made, when Captain Nick Chance had been shot down and the sea on his return from the Moon with warning of an invasion.

And Captain Nick Chance, the intrepid, red-headed skipper of the space vessel, had gone down with his ship.

True, his crew of three space-sailors and Lord Algernon Tyford, the young peer who

"Those are the fighting Moon squadrons cruising through the stratosphere," said Sir John Stornways. "We can pick up the sound, though our combat planes cannot climb high enough to engage them. In another hour they will be over the capital. London will be demolished, not by bombs but by devilish ray beams."

It was a terrible thought. And some of the delegates became grey and terror-stricken.

"This conference should be dissolved," said one harshly. "We make ourselves conspicuous here in the seat of Government. Simply targets for the Master of the Moon to aim at."

At this point Lord Algy intervened. He slipped in first at the spa-sailors, then on Lord Stornways and Lord Pique. Then he served a his monochrome and spoke.

"I'm loath to endorse that," he said quietly. "We happen to know we're not let the Moon Master see. He's followed us through the relay station, and he's marked the building as his target. The first place to be struck will be this building."

The startled spa-sailors nodded in agreement.

"But it's every man for himself," declared one delegate, rising to his feet. "I beg to adjourn this meeting."

"What?" burst out the Prime Minister of England harshly. "Shall we bolt to our holes like rabbits? Gentlemen, here we are assembled the best brains of the world to consider what is to be done for the world's safety, and we talk of running away?"

There was a hushed, breathless pause. Soldiers and statesmen sat with rigid, gripping chuddges of the table.

Yet . . . there was absolutely nothing to be done.

And before many minutes had passed a second alarm that the building was to be struck by a fearful disintegrating ray that would simply pulverise it, crash it in ruins atop of those soldiers and statesmen.

Tense, hushed moments of waiting. It seemed madness to remain and yet—

Suddenly there came a knock at the door, and a uniformed War Office attendant entered bearing a polished wooden box, which from its shape and design, might have been a radio receiving set. This he placed on the table, and then he turned and landed a sealed letter to Sir John Stornways.

"The letter will explain my intrusion, sir," he said. And went on to explain that he had been instructed by the War Office to bring the box there, and that powerful and secret representations had been brought to bear in the matter. It was a matter of extreme urgency, and would certainly warrant the interruption of the conference.

Then he with drew, and Sir John Stornways tore open the envelope.

His eyebrows shot up.

"Why, it's from Captain Nick Chance himself!" he exclaimed tensely.

The space-sailors and Lord Algy exchanged startled glances that were quickly replaced by delighted grins. It seemed impossible and yet—

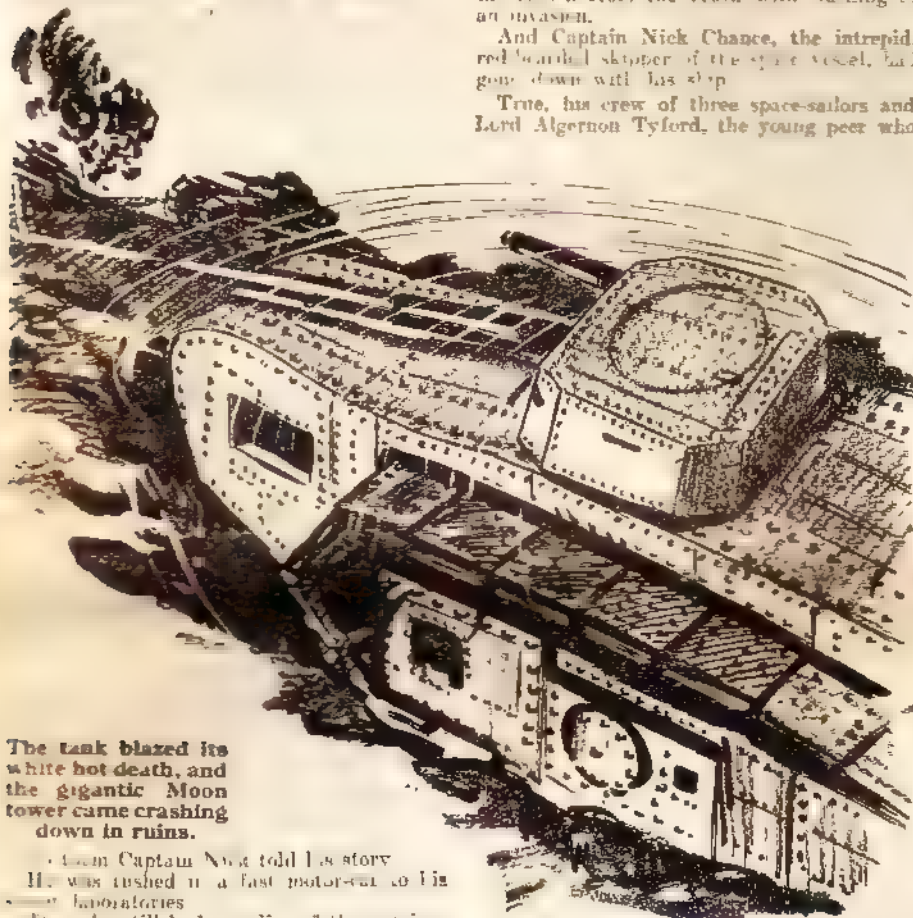
Sir John Stornways was reading the letter aloud—

"My Dear Prime Minister. You see I am alive after all, in spite of public-spirited attempts to drown me and sink my ship. Moreover, I have obtained sufficient supplies of the Moon metal, I hope, to combat the armed forces of the Moon."

I will explain my plans when I see you. It is important that I do not come in to London until the morning arrives to strike, for though the Master of the Moon thinks I am dead, he is too busy searching through the television screen.

You will find me on Salisbury Plain. Come immediately, and bring with you my space-suits and Lord Tyford. There is not an instant to waste.

In the meantime—and this is for the



The tank blazed its white-hot death, and the gigantic Moon tower came crashing down in ruins.

Then Captain Nick told his story. He was rushed in a fast motor-car to his laboratories.

There he still had supplies of the precious Moon metal. He demonstrated its amazing qualities to the War Office.

The invasion from the Moon was now an accomplished thing. The Master of the Moon had landed his terrible engines of war on Salisbury Plain. There was not a moment to lose.

Captain Nick impressed upon the officials that the one way to checkmate the invasion was by tanks. And with one tank in particular—a tank he equipped with a gun discharging the liquid fire generated from the Moon metal.

The whole, events were shaping in London where, even as that threatened evening, the whole world in ruin and destruction.

★ THE BATTLE WITH THE MOONMEN

"GENTLEMEN, we must prepare for the worst. The Moon fleet is sailing for London."

The Prime Minister spoke harshly.

Huddled of face, Sir John Stornways faced the world delegates gathered in the oak-panelled conference room of 10, Downing Street.

had accompanied him on his trip to the Moon, had been picked up.

It was tragic, however, that they should have been mistaken for a hostile craft. More tragic still that Captain Nick should have gone down with the doomed vessel. For he alone knew the secrets of that sinister device, the scientist Dr. Hugo Mehan who had made himself Master of the Moon and was waging this war on the world.

He alone knew how to counteract the devilish devices of this demon doctor.

And now it was too late. The Moonmen had landed. Other engines had been rolled to the ground. London itself was in peril, and the world was in a state of panic and terror.

A delegate rose to his feet. "On our defences—" he began.

"A powerless against the Moon machines," put in the Prime Minister tersely. "Listen, gentlemen, I will turn on the radio now. His message I can pick up the sound of ancient twelve-foot test tubes light, where our own planes can not yet reach."

He turned on the instrument, and instantly the room was filled with a swelling growl, and a massed machine gun fire.

The Battle on Salisbury Plain

utmost importance—I enclose a machine no bigger than a motor car magnet, which, however, generates a protective ray web capable of safeguarding the whole of London from aerial attack, which is imminent.

You must get your consulting engineers on the job at once. The power has to be transmitted through the immense network of wires which grid London—telegraph and telephone wires and cables. Every big electricity plant in London must be harnessed to the work. Electricities must be cut off from all private homes and public services during the next half-hour, and the forces utilized for the electric protective ray web.

I await you with the utmost anxiety.
NICHOLAS CHANCE.

When this astounding epistle had been read but half the delegates were on their feet, babbling with excitement.

Within the next few minutes all was activity. Buzzers rang, and all manner of officials came in and hurried out with instructions. The defence of London was being put into action.

"We are motoring to the theatre of war," said the Prime Minister, fixing the space-sailors with his eye as he struggled into his overcoat. "We can only hope that we get through safely to join Captain Nick Chance. Everything depends on him. Reports coming through state that things are going very badly with the British forces in the field."

Lord Algy screwed in his monocle, his heart beating madly.

"We have to look out for the Master of the Moon, sir," he advised. "He is watching for us on the television screen, and he'll pounce as he gets the chance. He's sworn to kill us."

Chance, Sambo and Submarine Sam Pike nodded agreement. Strange and grim beings they seemed at that moment. They were happy only when journeying with their intrepid leader through the realms of space or over dark waterfalls into the bowers of the earth, and their eyes shone with fierce hope at the prospect of joining him again.

They hurried out into Westminster, a big and powerful touring car awaited them. St. John Stornways motioned to Lord Algy that he was to drive—for their mission was of such secrecy that they must dispose with a chauffeur.

Lord Algy got into the driving seat, his eyebrows flashing in his square-jawed face. If there was one thing he could do it was drive a car.

And now! The big touring car threaded cautiously through the streets where there were all the signs of war invasion—a city at sea.

Searchlights flooded the sky, where London's defensive air squadrons roared, and through the panic-stricken streets dark figures surged to and fro. There was one cry on all lips.

"The Moonmen are coming. London is doomed!"

And then suddenly high over the city late-like lines of fire appeared, searing and crackling through the night sky. A gasp of wonder came from the Prime Minister's lips as he looked up and saw it.

"The protective ray web! Thank heaven we were in time!"

But the big touring car was on the outskirts of London by then, speeding along the roads like a torpedo travelling towards its objective.

Lord Algy sat at the wheel as if he were part of the car, his flashing monocle a fixture in his hawk-like young face. There is an artery in the face of England, running from London to Salisbury, and this was the road the young peer was taking.

They reached Salisbury in no time, it seemed, and now thunderous explosions in the far distance warned them that the invasion from the Moon was developing. They raced in the direction of a mighty glow in the night, their car rocking madly at seventy miles an hour.

And so they came out on Salisbury Plain. It was then that they saw the great Moon forts dropping from the sky.

It was awesome. They must have been miles away from the racing car, yet the occupants saw them clearly dropping in the heights through the night sky like mighty glowing torpedoes.

Probably the friction of the atmosphere in their miles-long fall through space caused them to glow. There were two of them, and they must have been bigger than St. Paul's Cathedral.

The stream of them as they fell through space was nerve-racking, the crash as they entered the Earth was leaden away, and for long minutes the Earth quivered and shook as it under the influence of an earthquake.

But the forces of the World were not idle. The long range guns filled the night with their terrible reverberations as they were trained on the forts that had fallen from the clouds.

The sound of the big guns as they gave throat was ear-splitting. And then Submarine Sam Pike, sitting beside Lord Algy, suddenly pointed and shivered. For strange developments were taking place round the Moon forts.

The first thing that happened was that the forts became surrounded by fierce, darting light. It was unmistakably a protective ray web, and by the next instant it possessed it deflected the great shells that screamed and whined around the forts.

Lord Algy's heart sank. And then he too, suddenly flung out his hand.

"Good God! Look!" he cried. "They're landing troops!"

★ WHITE HOT DEATH

It was so. Hugo gyroscope mono-trains, lighted and sent to earth, and moved with Moon soldiers were descending on rails down to the forts. The landing of Dr. Meriam's army was becoming an accomplished fact.

"Just at where will we find Captain Nick?" cried Lord Algy, desperate. "It's the only place where they stop this time. I don't know how to do it."

Even as he spoke they saw a tank rolling along the road. There was a hull, and a figure in a steel helmet mounted on the car ported up.

It was Captain Nick all right. Lord Algy and Sam Pike scrambled out of the car to greet him. Their pleasure at seeing the bearded space adventurer again was undiminished.

Behind him loomed what appeared to be a strange-looking Army tank with caterpillar wheels. Captain Nick jerked a thumb at it, and on his face there was a grim smile.

"Meriam's men," he cried, "were going into action against the landing Moonmen. I've pinned all my hopes on tanks," he added fiercely. "But look—"

Even as he spoke the other two saw an army of British tanks creeping over Salisbury Plain towards the Moon forts.

Suddenly the scene was lit weirdly as their guns landed fire.

It was a first that was carried in devastating fashion. There was a sudden white streak of light from the towering Moon forts that blinded and hurt the eyes. It continued for several minutes and even the catkins on the trees seemed to play around the Moon towers.

But as Lord Algy saw the havoc that the Moonmen were doing to the tanks and wrought amongst the gallant brigade of tanks, he went mad with rage.

"Look! They're smashing them up. We must go out!" he cried urgently. "Dash it, we're not standing for this!"

The bearded space adventurer looked at him, quizzically.

"We stand a good chance of never seeing the light of day again, your Lordship," he reminded the other. "But after all, my

own tank's made of Moon metal, and we've got a shock inside for 'em. Let's go."

Few minutes later, with Captain Nick driving, the strange tank was being hung over the ground on its caterpillar wheels, whilst Lord Algy and Submarine Sam Pike crouched over strange-looking guns within, their faces grim and set under the steel helmets they were wearing. The others were left with the car.

As they rattled over the ground Captain Nick explained that the long barrelled guns were his own invention. I pointed out he played his whole role in effect-making the invasion from the Moon.

They projected a liquid fire generated from the Moon metal itself, and thus, Captain Nick Chance believed, his enemy had been unable to accomplish for all his inventive genius.

He had also advocated tanks as the most effective weapons against the Moon invasion; but now it would seem that his hopes and his reputation were to be shattered, for as the tank containing the space adventurers advanced slowly it seemed every yard terrible evidence of the futility of the World's resistance to the invasion from the Moon.

One thing had been done by the Earth's forces, however. The protective ray web barrage had so far been effective in keeping the Moonmen away from London—the city that the Master of the Moon had desired to destroy.

The ground was strewn with the wreckage of shattered and broken tanks. The rubble heaped that had advanced in mass formation upon the Moon towers was broken and shattered.

Still a few of the British tanks were creeping forward over the ground, but surely they knew what their fate must be.

The car rolled and shook with the thunder of guns. The huge Moon towers remained untouched. Round them like forked lightning the white tongues of the protective ray barrage quivered, preserving them from the shells that screamed and whined through the air.

The British tanks were doing no visible damage to the Moon towers, but being deflected by the ray barrage from the Moon towers they fell and crashed upon the tanks, causing a few were mangled and shattered than the ray guns from the Moon forts themselves.

Lord Algy, seeing all this, the moonlight glint that spread over Salisbury Plain, set his teeth. His mouth was so dry that he could not speak, his whole body tingled and quivered with the lightning instinct.

Wait till we get our guns on 'em! grunted Captain Nick, his train reel behind him aggressively.

Lord Algy glanced at Sam Pike. The Submarine man was crouching on his cigs as he crouched at the head of one of the guns, and his eyes were narrowed to slitting slits.

The tank advanced slowly but surely upon one of the forts, which was lit with ray guns from its many gun ports. As Lord Algy saw the gyroscope moving down to the Moonmen from the landing platforms he saw, however, he wondered how it would end.

It only the British guns would cease! Lord Algy guessed. Some of them were pined down many miles away but some thing had gone wrong, for the tanks had advanced into the zone of the barrage from their own guns. It was one of the tragedies of war.

But as if in answer to his own thoughts, and with the screaming of shells diminished, the gun emplacements with a radius of a hundred miles had been smashed or what was happening, and they fell silent.

And now Captain Nick's tank was on its own effective gun range of one of the Moon forts.

Lord Algy's heart beat fast. Though a port-hole he saw that behind their tank were

Space Captain Sends out his Blazing Metal of Death

Can it be DONE?

Things the World
is wanting

others, and British troops with bayonets fixed were advancing stealthily on foot.

It was evident that the Moon metal tank was the last hope of the British. In a solid phalanx other tanks and the foot troops advanced behind its cover. And yet they could they hope to prevail. In what particular was the Moon metal tank superior to those constructed of steel and iron?

Lord Algy was soon to learn.

In a moment he saw that the ray guns from the Moon tower were directed upon their own tank. This audacious tank had crept too near. It must be destroyed.

Lord Algy distinctly saw the muzzles of the ray guns lifting and moving like beasts scenting prey.

And then suddenly he heard a loud click which was followed by a fierce cracking sound that seemed to come from a hundred tons.

He gazed out astounded. A protective ray barrier was playing round the moving tank.

Captain Nick Chance's eyes like blue fire, his beard more aggressive than ever, had turned to him.

"That'll give the Master of the Moon a shock, eh? He doesn't know I'm still alive and fighting him with my own weapons. I've improved on his own Moon ray. These guns, I hope, will hurl blasting shafts of radio electricity which will break down their language and destroy the forts. It's our only hope."

He had scarcely spoken when there came a sound like the shattering of a thousand tons, and the Moon tower was sheeted in blinding white light.

For long seconds there was a turmoil of sound and the tank as offensive rays met defensive walls—then the hoarse yell, and spiteful forked lightning seemed to play round the Moon tower as its power crumbled.

Certainly the tank was unharmed. Lord Algy was amazed. The young man was gripped by a great excitement as the tank moved on a side road.

"Moon Master!" roared Submarine Sam Pike in his abominable nasal accent.

"This is where we give you a dose of yer own medicine. We that gyroscope train your Lordship? Well, we'll smash it up."

Lord Algy immediately concentrated on his gun. A Lunar mono-train was swirling down from the blazing arsenal high above in a blaze of light, its every window manned by clever Moonmen, firing with their liquid fire guns at those soldiers who still staggered over the scarred battle ground.

The tank dipped in a great shell hole and came up. And Lord Algy, sighting his gun on the mono-train, suddenly threw his weight on the breach lever. He was answered by a hiss as of a thousand snakes, and by a blinding searing light spearing out ahead of him.

It had its twin in the blaze that came from the gun worked by Submarine Sam Pike.

A hoarse cheer came from Lord Algy's throat. The mono-train had collapsed in flames. Those aboard her must have died a swift death as she fell crashing to Earth.

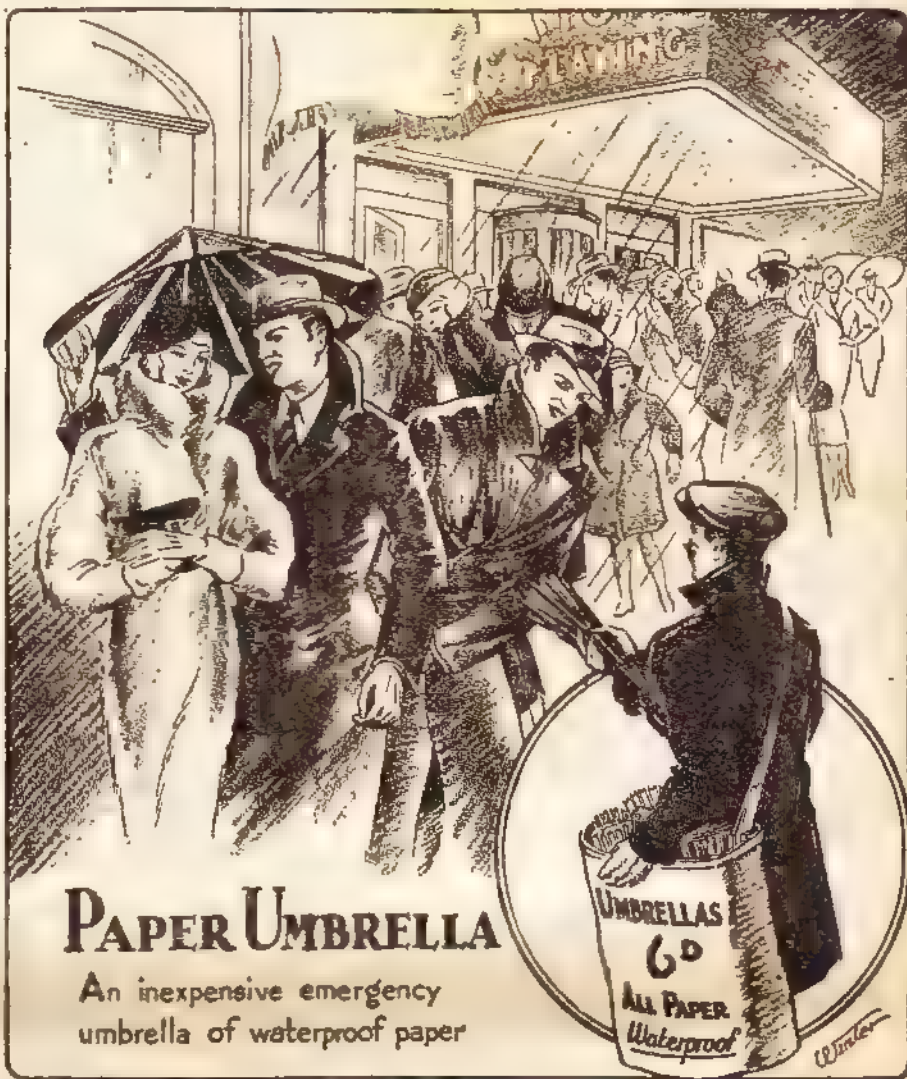
Lord Algy was busy at his gun. From the Moon tower upon which the tank was advancing there came the vicious throb of ultimate, powerful machines—a threatening that rose to a veritable scream.

And then suddenly from the Moon tower charged the Moonmen.

They had charged previously, but that was before Lord Algy and the space sailors had arrived on the scene. They had charged, sending the lines of khaki reeling back in confusion and disorder.

The Master of the Moon had been keeping them in reserve, however, until he had subdued the long range guns. Now it, desperate, he was sending his shock troops out again upon the obdurate tank.

The scene was like that of inferno, making the senses reel. Thousands of Moonmen sped out from the great doorways of the Moon towers as if released from mighty



PAPER UMBRELLA

An inexpensive emergency
umbrella of waterproof paper

There is still money to be made in simple things. A sudden shower—an umbrella! Hundreds of people would buy cheap waterproof paper covers such as those illustrated. Can it be done?

floodgates, and came pounding across the plain.

They were charging upon the tank, manned by Captain Nick and his crew, and the trailing occupants felt that undoubtedly there were coming the most decisive moments in this staggering war with the Moonmen.

A myriad spiteful beams from ray guns flashed at the great tank, and Captain Nick and his two companions were hit in an unmerciful way as they crouched over their guns.

"Wait till I give the word," crackled the red-headed post captain. "And pray the fates that our ray web will hold out its strength. The devil about it is that they expend so much power."

But the ray web still crackled all around them, and continued a sure defence.

"Now!" shouted Captain Nick Chance. Flaming, despite themselves, Lord Algy and Sam Pike threw over the breaches of their strange guns, directing them upon the charging monsters from the Moon.

There was a wild hissing. A flood of incandescent white fire leapt from Lord Algy's gun in a long stream like water ejected from a powerful fire hose. And the same happened with Sam Pike's gun. The streams smashed against the charging hosts from the Moon.

The effect was devastating. These molten streams stopped what had seemed a terrible, irresistible force. The hideous creatures from the Moon were lost in a sudden, roaring white holocaust.

It seemed as if molten hills of metal, flaring white, hissing, running in rivulets and

streams, had suddenly appeared before Lord Algy's eyes.

Wild uncontrollable cheers rose to the lips of the space adventurers within the tank.

* * * * *

Captain Nick Chance was shouting to make his voice heard.

"Look! The British troops are equipped with the guns. Swift aeroplanes are bringing more Moon metal over, and the world will soon be fully equipped to smash the invasion from the Moon. It's the old story in war—numbers win. Well we've got the right hand in the liquid Moon metal."

It was true. British soldiers with strange cylinders were charging upon the remainder of the hosts from the Moon. And the effect as they passed the nozzles of their strange guns was devastating.

"I'll say you did well to get out of that wreath, Captain," grinned Submarine Sam Pike, shifting his cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other. "That was the trump card you played."

But Captain Nick had suddenly become grim.

"The battle is not won yet," he said in his clipped tones. "Remember, danger to the Earth comes from the Moon itself. Those Moon seas kept in motion by the Halls of Machinery are pulling the Lunar disc nearer to Earth, and causing disruption and chaos. That menace must be smashed. Our work is not done until we have completely crippled the power of the Master of the Moon."

More thrilling adventures in next week's final episode of this amazing series.

DEVILMAN of the I

★IN THE DEVILMAN'S POWER

MARK STANMORE naively he knew every sensation that deep sea diving can give. But here he was experiencing a new emotion.

Rising from the bottom of the sea six miles deep off the coast of South America he had no feeling of pressure.

And rising at the same easy rate were his two companions, Bulwer Kells and Amy Cornwall, also enclosed in diving dresses and with a large bundle of air surrounding each.

Their dresses were of the kind that has no need for the constant supply of air. On their backs were strapped boxes containing a supply that would last for hours, and the oxygen came automatically through a nozzle from the back of their helmets.

To Stanmore his companions looked like beetles enclosed in a globe of air, and to them he undoubtedly looked the same.

They could not communicate with each other, of course, but Stanmore's mind was a scientific one. Every moment his brain was seeking facts and fitting them to his knowledge and experience.

Already he was wondering just why these bubbles kept himself and his companions enclosed. Why didn't the globes of air leak out or burst under the pressure of the ocean around them? He peered through his goggles curiously, and he noticed something that was funny due to the situation.

For he noticed his companions, and himself, seemed to radiate a constant multitude of tiny points of movement. They were like the minute particles one sees in a glass of effervescent water; in other words, they were hardly visible particles of air dissociating themselves from the main bubble.

In a flash Stanmore saw the reason for this. The fraction was wearing the bubbles away. By the time he and his companions reached the surface the air would be spent and the bubbles gone.

And down below, on the bed of the ocean from which they came, using the bubbles whom he had seen, whose diving he had just left, was a monster of their creation.

It seemed hardly credible that in the depths of the sea there was a community of intelligent beings unknown to man, utilizing and using under the rule of this monster known as Devilman. Yet he had seen these things he had talked with them, he had slain some of them just as they had tried to slay him.

Stanmore's thoughts were whirling at the story he would be able to present before the learned societies of the world when he was able to tell them.

He pictured the astonishment, the criticism, the questioning, the scoffing with which his tale would be received.

Had he seen them? Or was this merely a dream of a disordered imagination? Would he wake up and find himself on board his vessel safe and sound?

A dark object floated up from the void and passed before his face glass, blotting out the vision of his two companions. Stanmore's heart missed a beat as a second form floated up, then a third, a fourth.

His upward progress was suddenly arrested. He saw a pair of eyes peering at him through the sphere of air around him. He saw the semi-human faces of fish-men all round.

For a moment he hung there, all movement suspended. And then his brain reeled as a load seemed to disengage in front of him. It was as if he had received a soundless blow that took the senses momentarily from him.

Up past him his blanket of air flashed like

A MIGHTY CIVILISATION under the Strange and Terrifying Race of Fish-men but for the Steel and Iron that only Man

"They were prevented in the same way as you from rising to the surface. I sent fish-men to burst your air bubbles and bring you down. Tell me this. Was it Sea Flight that helped you?"

"Who is Sea Flight?" parried Stanmore, and then, without waiting for an answer, he rushed on with a torrent of words.

"What is the meaning of this? What right have you to compel us to remain in your submarine world? Where are my companions? What have you done with them?"

He glanced round and saw that the reservoirs of his companions still lay on the floor of the cavern where they had been thrown by the magnetic power. The diving goggles by which they had come to this strange world lay some distance off.

The cave wall had been thrust back into its position, barricading

Standing beside the strange scientist Stanmore gazed down at the amazing scene below. In the vast arena a great crane swung out over the two Earthmen, bearing its load of molten rock.

a flame of white cloud. The sudden cold that struck him told him that his bubble had burst, that he was protected from the pressure of the sea by his diving dress only.

There was a hammering in his ears, a rush of blood to his head. His second wound began to bleed.

"Caisson disease! That was the thought that flashed into his brain. Caisson disease, the dread of an divers, the disease that comes on from too great pressure.

He put up his hand to regulate the flow of oxygen into his helmet, and that was the last thing he remembered for some time, except that he was falling headlong downward again, and that the terms of his man were falling with him, dragging him back to the base of the ocean depths.

Everything was a fading sphere. His sight of his companions, as everything Black Kells came upon him.

When he opened his eyes he was lying on a rocky plateau, still in his diving dress, but the helmet had been abandoned.

He gasped at the air that rushed in and heard a distant rumbling. His dress was flat and crumpled, showing that he was no longer in water.

He heard a grunt of satisfaction. Looking up, he saw the Devilman watching him. They were alone in a chamber, the very chamber into which he and Kells and Cornwall had been taken on their first descent.

"Now that you are recovered," said the Devilman, "you will see that it is impossible to escape from me. Yet I have spared your life because I need you."

Stanmore sat up and began to wriggle out of his dress. He did not answer, but the Devilman went on.

"Who gave you the diving dress? Who helped you to rise from the caverns of my dominions?"

Stanmore threw aside his dress and put his hands to his head, which was throbbing intensely.

"Where are my companions?" he asked huskily.

on the sea. But there was no need of that left his eyes as they took in all these facts. The ship from which he had originally descended was also within the cavern.

It lay hauled up on its copper bottom and tilted against the granite wall to starboard. Its sheathing gleamed in the dim light that pervaded the place.

But the vessel had not come ashore, it had descended.

Its two masts, fore and aft, had broken off at their bases. Its wireless aerial lay over the bulwarks; its deck cabins were smashed and the roofs caved in.

A faintness came over Stanmore as he realised that he was alone with the Devilman, that Kells and Cornwall were probably prisoners, or dead; that he was practically helpless before this monster, whose depths he could not penetrate.

Devilman, who had been watching Stan-



DEEP

nitless depths of the Ocean. A
t who would travel to the Surface,
t give them. Horror waits Below

more closely rose to his enormous height and trumpeted shrilly. The light in the cavern grew brighter and Stanmore saw, with amazement, that shatters of rock had opened beside the walls of the cave, letting in a flood of blinding radiation that lit the cave as well as it. He saw, too, that fish-men were standing in groups at intervals. They were guards surrounding dark passages that might be doors in the cliffs.

A moment or two later there emerged from one of these doors in the rock two fish-men, bearing in their arms round



He pushed the second shell towards Stanmore who hesitated no longer, but ate his fill. He had been faint for want of food, but now he seemed to give an

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He pushed the second shell towards Stanmore who hesitated no longer, but ate his fill. He had been faint for want of food, but now he seemed to give an

on his guard. If Devilman discovered the intentions of himself and his companions he would know their frailty in this new world.

But for the moment Devilman was guessing; and his arm was hanging limply by his side. There was a gush, too, of the bathery skin where Kells's bullet had pierced it, but the wound was almost healed already.

There flashed into Stanmore's mind a fact he had almost forgotten as he gazed at the monster that had something of the shark in his nature and this fact was a simple truth known to practically every fisherman who studies fish scientifically.

Every fish has a kind of sixth sense that keeps it, even in black waters, from colliding with its kind. Salmon can tell when a man is treading the banks of the stream. This sixth sense is contained in the fine thread of sensitiveness that runs from head to tail. And as Stanmore gazed at Devilman he sensed that the vulnerable point of this mass of living terror was there.

"Had I wished to kill you, Devilman," he said slowly, "I would not have caught your arm. I would have snapped the thread from your head to your feet."

The look of fear that passed over the monster's face told that Stanmore had hit his target; but the look passed as swiftly as it had come, and in its place there rose a sullen expression.

Devilman trumpeted again. The two fish-men came and removed the shells now that Stanmore had finished his meal; but they removed more than the shells.

At a sign from Devilman they picked up the knives and the revolvers that had been plucked from his and his companions' belts. These weapons had lain where they had fallen.

Once more Devilman trumpeted. This time fish-men came from their stations and rounded a circle round Stanmore. One of them looked at him and gave him a signal. He was motioned towards the cave.

But there was a difference in these caves. When they had been down they were not lit with a ruddy glow. The shutters of rock had been slid back and it seemed as if there were furnaces blazing on the very edge of the caves.

These shutters moved gratingly, and as Stanmore was taken to the innermost cave he saw the whole place enclosed in a circle of fire.

The best of the place was great, but not comfortable. It seemed as if Stanmore were standing on an immense platform and the fires leaped and roared above and disappeared up hidden chimneys.

The ground was warm under his feet. He sniffed quickly at the sulphurous steam and he saw that the air was more than distinct, making him sneeze.

Hardly had he taken in all this when another body of fish-men appeared. In their midst there was someone walking, another captive.

Stanmore's heart leaped at the thought that this might be Kells or Cornwall. A moment later he saw it was Sea Flight.

★ THE REVOLT OF THE FISH-MEN

NOW the cavern became alive with fish-men. They came from the roof, from crevices on all sides, from behind, making in from the outer caves. But they collected in a mass behind the two groups in the cave of which were Stanmore and Sea Flight. Their silence gave the number of the foot.

The voice of Devilman rose high and rang through the cavern.

Sea Flight is to find. He is accused of helping the fish-men to escape. He does not deny. He does not affirm. He has no answer before the fish-men. Sea Flight says you plead guilty?"

Not a sound from Sea Flight. He stood with bowed head, his arms folded, and Stan-

circle which Stanmore saw as they advanced, were enormous shells. In the shells were wrapped some of the food that they placed on the ground before Stanmore and Devilman.

"That is food," said Devilman. "Eat it and regain your strength. I need your strength. Do not be afraid to eat."

Furnished as he was Stanmore lifted some of the food in his hand and ate a little. To his surprise the taste was very pleasant, and he found him of crab or lobster, but there was an additional tang about it that spoke of salt water.

And the taste of the food was so good

The Fight with the Fish-men

more naked than these arms had been fastened across his chest with hands.

"This is Stanmore, the man who was leader of the invaders!" came the voice of Devilman, as he advanced to the centre of the floor. "What does he say? Did Sea Flight aid you to leave the caves of the fish-men?"

Stanmore's eyes caught those of Sea Flight. There seemed to be a dumb appeal in the latter's glance. Stanmore pressed his lips together firmly. If Sea Flight had been loyal to him, he was bound to be loyal now to Sea Flight. He resolved to take his cue from the fish-man.

Half a minute passed in silence. Devilman came into view, stepping softly forward, towering above the others. His face wore a look of grim triumph.

"Since Sea Flight refuses to answer, he may be judged guilty. I, Devilman, ruler of the caverns of the deep, give sentence."

He paused and threw out his long arm towards the fires that leaped like immense furnaces before the captives.

"Death!" he said slowly. "Cast him in!"

Again a silence for a split second, and the band of fish-men who surrounded Sea Flight seemed to hesitate.

Devilman's voice rose again in order.

The fish-men laid hands on Sea Flight; but at that moment a small object fell from the roof of the cavern and crashed on the floor. A column of smoke arose, and there was a blinding flash, a roar as if the earth had rent in two.

The fish-men were thrown across the cavern like wispes of straw, the place was filled with yells and screams of pain.

Stanmore had been thrown down with the others by the loud explosion. He lay on the ground, surrounded by his guards, stunned and dazed by the crash.

The explosion had taken place some distance from him and beyond where Sea Flight stood. He crawled towards the entrance to the cave, where the ice wall was open. He was conscious of a pungent smoke that stung his eyes and face and caught him at the throat.

He heard Devilman screaming orders. In the smoke that pervaded the cavern he could see nothing for a time. He only heard the screams of fear and agony from the fish-men.

His brain reeled at that reverberating explosion; and as he crawled he felt a soft sucker-arm touch his hand. A voice spoke: "Lie still, Earthman. Lie still. Wait!"

It was Sea Flight who had crawled next to him; Sea Flight who was blinking and shaking his head to clear his eyes from the acid smoke.

"Loosen my bonds, Earthman!"

In a moment Stanmore's fingers were untying the seaweed with which Sea Flight was bound. He cast off the last lash and saw the aged fish-man rise to his feet. A heavy shadow fell across Stanmore, and Devilman's voice screamed.

"I will kill you myself, Sea Flight!"

He had crept after Sea Flight through the smoke and now hit the fish-man on his great suckers; but Sea Flight's right sucker had already fastened on the monster's neck.

Back tottered Devilman, bearing the fish-man in his arms, but Sea Flight lunged the closer, and now his second arm was round Devilman's throat. Stanmore saw it feeling frantic any for a spot at the base of Devilman's skull, that vital square inch where the backbone joined the skull.

It was a fight of giants, for Devilman had all the brute strength, but Sea Flight had all the agility of his race.

"Help!" cried Devilman. "Help!"

Stanmore turned his head. The smoke had lifted the fish-men who had survived that explosion were coming to their ruler's aid; and then a second missile descended from the roof.

It fell between the fish-men and the struggling combatants. A blinding flash rent

the air, a thunderous roar crashed out, more smoke filled the cavern.

The fish-men seemed to dissipate in that explosion. They were blown to pieces and Stanmore, who had risen to his feet, was thrown aside and volleyed against the bulk of Devilman.

Down went the three of them, all struggling for a hold, and as Stanmore's hands gripped the shoulders of Devilman he felt a blow from that monster's arm that opened his forehead as if a hatchet had struck it.

He sank to his knees; but even then he saw that Sea Flight was still looking to the rock of the monster, still gripping where his sucker had touched; and Devilman was clawing desperately to free himself.

They rolled over and over in the fog of the smoke. And then Devilman's weight began to tell. He was on top of Sea Flight.

He put all his weight into a terrible attempt to crush the other into oblivion. Up went the great shoulders, his arms caught Sea Flight by the chin. He began to force back Sea Flight's head with irresistible pressure.

★ A SPY OF THE DEEP

SLOWLY the pressure told. Sea Flight's sucker came away from the nape of Devilman's neck. His arm fell limp, but the other hand held a moment longer. Then it, too, came away. Weight was telling.

Stanmore rose to his knees, the blood streaming from his face, his head dizzy, his eyes filled with tears that ran down his cheeks so that he could hardly see.

But through the mist he saw Sea Flight's peril. With an effort he launched himself at Devilman and clung to the monster's arm.

Twice he slipped off that leathery mass, but three times he gripped it. His face was close to that of Devilman. The latter gnashed his teeth at Stanmore, trying to bite him with his fearful tusks.

"For this attack, you die, Earthman!" he gasped; but still Stanmore hung to that arm.

He saw that Devilman's sucker was curling the neck of Sea Flight. Already the latter was almost past help, and the thought of the wonder taking place before his eyes sent a tremble of rage through Stanmore.

Up went his fist. He dashed it with all his force into the ghastly face of Devilman. Again he hit with all his strength. A third time he lashed out at the eel-like countenance.

Each time he struck, the head of Devilman jerked back, and then Stanmore ceased to strike. He threw his arm around the leathery neck and dug his fingers into that spot which Sea Flight had sought to hold.

He felt the soft skin yield under his fingers. He felt the soft bone below, the four vertebrae of the supple backbone. In vain Devilman tried to shake him off. Stanmore held on, grim as death.

But fish-men were coming now in answer to Devilman's guttural screams. Stanmore saw that great havoc had been made by the bombs that had descended.

Who had thrown the bombs? His mind could not grasp the situation just then; all he knew was that bombs had been thrown. He knew the bombs, too. They were bombs used by the British Army, filled with a gas that blinded men with tears, but did not kill except from the force of the explosion. Tear gas bombs! That's what they were. But who threw the bombs, and where did they come from originally?

All these thoughts ran through his head as he clung to Devilman's throat, and as he glanced around and saw the fish-men who had escaped death coming towards him.

His strength was giving way. Devilman was as slippery as an eel. The fish-men would kill both himself and Sea Flight, Stanmore thought. But he wanted to kill Devilman

first. How he wanted to kill this monster!

A soft hand touched him again. It was the sucker of a fish-man. It grabbed at his neck. He felt the cozy softness of the thing. He saw the terrible jaws of the fish-men bent on his destruction; and then the hand fell away. The fish-men drew back. More screams rent the air.

At that moment Devilman dropped. The pressure of Stanmore's thumb and fingers had done their work up to a point.

Devilman was not dead, but he had collapsed under that grip, and he fell on the body of Sea Flight with a slithering movement that brought Stanmore down too.

The fish-men were screaming and retreating. Why had they not slain him when they had the chance? Stanmore scrambled to a sitting posture and looked round. Next moment his hair rose on end.

No wonder the fish-men had retreated. He saw them escaping through the side doors of the cave as fast as they could crush their way, but the panic only impeded their escape.

Stanmore cried out in terror. Past him a gigantic body had moved slowly, throwing out its long arms putting itself along the floor with a series of short heaves. And coming through the ice wall opening were others of this awful species.

They were gigantic octopuses.

His gaze riveted on the monster that had missed him and was making for the fish-men, Stanmore sat stupidly, unable to move a finger.

He saw the leader of these poisonous creatures reach the fish-men who crowded by a passage. He saw the long tentacles thrown out. They fell on the fish-men, bearing them down and curling round them in terrible embrace. Out went another tentacle, and more fish-men went down.

But Stanmore was galvanised into life at the sight of horror. He bounded to his feet and was about to run when he glanced at the form of Sea Flight. The latter's eyes had opened. He was not dead.

Quick as thought Stanmore lifted the fish-man, threw him over his shoulder, and made for one of the narrow passages. He intended to take his chance with the fish-men, but saw that it was impossible to get through. The fish-men were stricken with panic. Their natural foes had invaded their caves and were taking toll.

Stanmore turned to make for another opening, when a fish-man dashed out of a dark crevice.

"This way! This way!"

Without question Stanmore followed; and as he was about to enter the opening which had suddenly appeared before him, he became aware that the fires surrounding the cavern were darkened suddenly. Every shutter had been closed, the rocks grinding their way across the face of the furnaces and falling into place with thuds.

He saw, too, that immediately he had entered the passage the fish-man who had directed him pushed at a rock. The opening closed behind them. All was black. The fish-man's hand felt for and sank into Stanmore's palm.

"Do not fear, Earthman," he said. "Sea Flight is our leader. We are his followers and the enemies of Devilman. This way!"

Stumbling, but still bearing his burden, Stanmore did as he was bidden. He climbed a steep slope, his feet striking against ledges that dripped with water. His head now and then coming into contact with the roof.

Where he was being led he did not know, nor care.

He at last became conscious that he was on a level. A faint light burned dimly in the distance. The fish-man still held his hand, as one would lead a child.

What seemed to be a curtain was raised and gave entrance to a small cave. In the centre of the cave an oil lamp burned, and on the floor were blankets and skins of a kind that Stanmore had never seen before. He noticed that there were books on a shelf,

In the Arena of Death

then was withdrawn. The fish-man's body crumpled and fell in a heap.

"You see now Devilman uses these poor fools," said Sea Flight gently. "That is the second time, Stanmore, you have saved us. I shall not forget."

He lifted the body of the dead fish man and tossed it far down the dark corridor. Then dashed back into the cave.

Out went the light, the skins were thrust into a corner, a large rock was rolled from the back of the cave and across the door. Hardly had this been done when the swish-swish of footsteps were heard closer to their cave.

Voices muttered. Sea Flight drew Stanmore back against the wall. Healer stood beside them. They hardly breathed.

The voice of Devilman came from the passage outside.

"It is somewhere here, the hiding place of Sea Flight. Where has the guide gone?"

General voices mumbled words that could not be distinguished. Again Devilman spoke.

"Some of you stand here and keep guard. I will ferret Sea Flight out after I have disposed of the two Earthmen. What is that living there?"

A cry rose, for they had found the body that Sea Flight had thrown out.

Stanmore felt Sea Flight's hand in his, pulling him towards the back of the cave. He followed and found himself going through another passage. It was but a short one, and in a few minutes he was standing in a place he recognised. It was the ledge above the machinery room.

The machinery was moving slowly, the great pumps working, the wheels revolving to the pull and tug of belts and shafting.

"Do not be surprised," whispered Sea Flight. "The whole of the mountain in which we live is honeycombed with passages and caverns. I alone know every track. Healer knows most. Devilman knows less than we."

He stretched out his hand and caught at a cable that stretched aslant the mass of machinery.

"Follow me," he said. "We shall slide down this way."

Down the cable they went, hand over hand, above the machinery, and Stanmore marvelled at the enormous apparatus as he passed over it.

He heard the giant pumps sucking and forcing the air from below. He saw actual fires in the depths, from which red hot flames gammered and gases rose. He was balanced over the mouth of a living volcano, and a look into the depths showed him an inferno that seethed down to the very centre of the Earth.

They swung across the vast pit in which the machinery was working and landed on another shelf some distance down. Then down more staircases and runtings, until Sea Flight gave the order to halt.

The embarking had, he whispered, and pointed to a jutting rock.

Stanmore crept along and looked round the elbow of his stone. He was on the edge of a amphitheatre as large as the Alhambra. The sides of it were tiered and cut into grooves, and standing on these terraces and grooves were fish-men, but they were different from those he had already seen.

They had smaller bodies, coarser skins, almost black in colour. Their heads were deformed fish-shaped, but their eyes were more like human arms.

In the middle of the amphitheatre the ground had been away and seemed to be a great pit like a mine and in the centre of this cone molten rock bubbled and seethed.

Across the space a great horizontal bar extended from the front of the stage and a steady steel was suspended by a cable. The bar was controlled by a small, round, opposite side of the bar, just as a bar of a scale is controlled.

As Stanmore looked at this scene in

the very bowels of the Earth he saw two figures emerge from a door and march along one of the furrows. They were the figures of Bulmer Kells and Abel Cornwall.

Behind them came a group of the small black fish-men, like little gnomes of the darkness. And behind the black elves came a body of fish-men from the upper caves. Followed Devilman, stalking grimly.

No words were used. Devilman stood watching, the fish-men surrounding him as a guard. The little black gnomes began their terrible work.

First the crane was raised until its leg was almost an upright and hung level with the ledge on which Stanmore stood. It swung round slowly, and the bucket was dropped straight to the centre of the cone.

Down it went like a stone and plunged into the red hot molten rock below. Then up it came, and the great mass of the cone was lowered until it became horizontal again, and moved towards the two captives.

It hovered over them. The black fish-men drew back, leaving Kells and Cornwall together.

NEXT WEEK....

More thrilling reading matter than any other 2d. paper. That's the aim of SCOOPS, and here is next week's big contents bill.

● The Immortal Man

A man makes a deal with the devil—conquers death! His achievement rocks the world.

● Revolt of the Stone Men

In the mystery caverns of the Earth dwell the stone men. Terror comes when they revolt.

● Bandits of the Stratosphere

The pirates of the stratosphere, but bandits in a way.

● Devilman of the Deep

Civil war in the kingdom of the undersea.

● Space

Thrills and terror in the galaxy of millions of Space ships.

● Master of the Moon

War is carried to the face of the Moon.

● Voice from the Void

A Phantom ship strikes in the void—reels, and a warning comes from the stars.

In Next Thursday's—

....SCOOPS

Flash! A drop of white, like a falling star, descended from the bucket and splashed on the rock in front of Cornwall.

Flash! Another drop fell and landed on the rock in front of Kells.

Immediately these drops of molten rock fell on the feet of the two small black gnomes and the black fish-men threw a handful of powdery substance on the spot. It flashed and then went silver and down.

Stanmore went on as he saw the slaves and hand labourers who were exposed. He knew the meaning now of the bucket full of white powder, and then they would be crushed in a mass of rock.

The powder the black fish-men threw on the hot rock was phosphorus, ground to dust. It would burn in the air. The fish-men were determined to burn the captives.

Down went the talons of the crane in a wide swing and a third drop fell, and then a fourth and a fifth, and the smoking camp-beside the two men was laid waste to destruction.

But the captives had to move and send the bucket down again to get the molten rock. Stanmore saw the bucket going

with the bucket raised for the plunge into the red depths. He turned to Sea Flight, who stood behind him, and saw the latter loading a revolver on him. It was one of the electric revolvers which had been lost.

"I cannot save them, Stanmore," he said sadly. "If mercy you can shoot so that they die quickly."

Stanmore lifted the gun, and his hand trembled. He was a coward for the Devilman, but the latter was standing at an angle out of range.

Once more Stanmore lifted the gun and took aim. His intention was to kill his enemies, rather than allow them to be tortured, but even as his hand trembled he saw Abel Cornwall bend towards Kells.

It was only a quick movement, and then Cornwall leaped from his position. As he was at his heels. They dashed the small fish-men aside, and were making for the upper ridges of the pit when Stanmore's voice rang out.

"The crane, Kells! The crane, Cornwall! Up the leg of the crane!"

And as he spoke he turned his revolver at the fish-men who were about to come. A long wait one electric bullet into the small controlling platform. Then another, then a third.

The crane's leg was at its highest, almost perpendicular, and it was swinging towards the sea. Sea Flight saw it.

It was a terrible sight, as well. They were at the edge and went up the leg of the crane to grasp the top wire. The great platform trembled and the cable trembled.

The fish-man on the platform may have been wounded, but he was still operating to bring the leg of the crane down.

Stanmore waited in front of the platform, frowning deliberately at every second of it. He was waiting for the crane to come down, and the operator stagger to the edge of the platform and fall.

Now Stanmore came into full view. He raised his gun, which was empty of shells, and pointed it towards Devilman, who had come into range.

"Stand where you are, Devilman, or—"

A wave of the gun was back. Devilman saw the potency of the weapon. He stood still. Not a word came from his lips.

Kells and Cornwall could see Stanmore now. They kept clanking fast; but now were they to get from the crane to the shore? What he stood? Stanmore swung round and found that Sea Flight and Healer stood beside him. The Healer and disappeared.

"A moment," said Sea Flight, smiling. "A moment, my friend."

Stanmore glanced at his comrades. They all have to pump for it, he thought; and he knew that the pump was greater than any man could take.

"Can you throw?" asked a voice at his elbow.

It was the Healer, bearing a rope of tough seaweed, light and as strong as any cable. He held it out to Sea Flight and a heavy coil.

At last Abel Cornwall caught the end. He fastened it to the crane and down the rope both he and Kells slid to safety. Then they lay on the rope drop. Its lower end caught fire and blazed upward and dropped in a mass of fire.

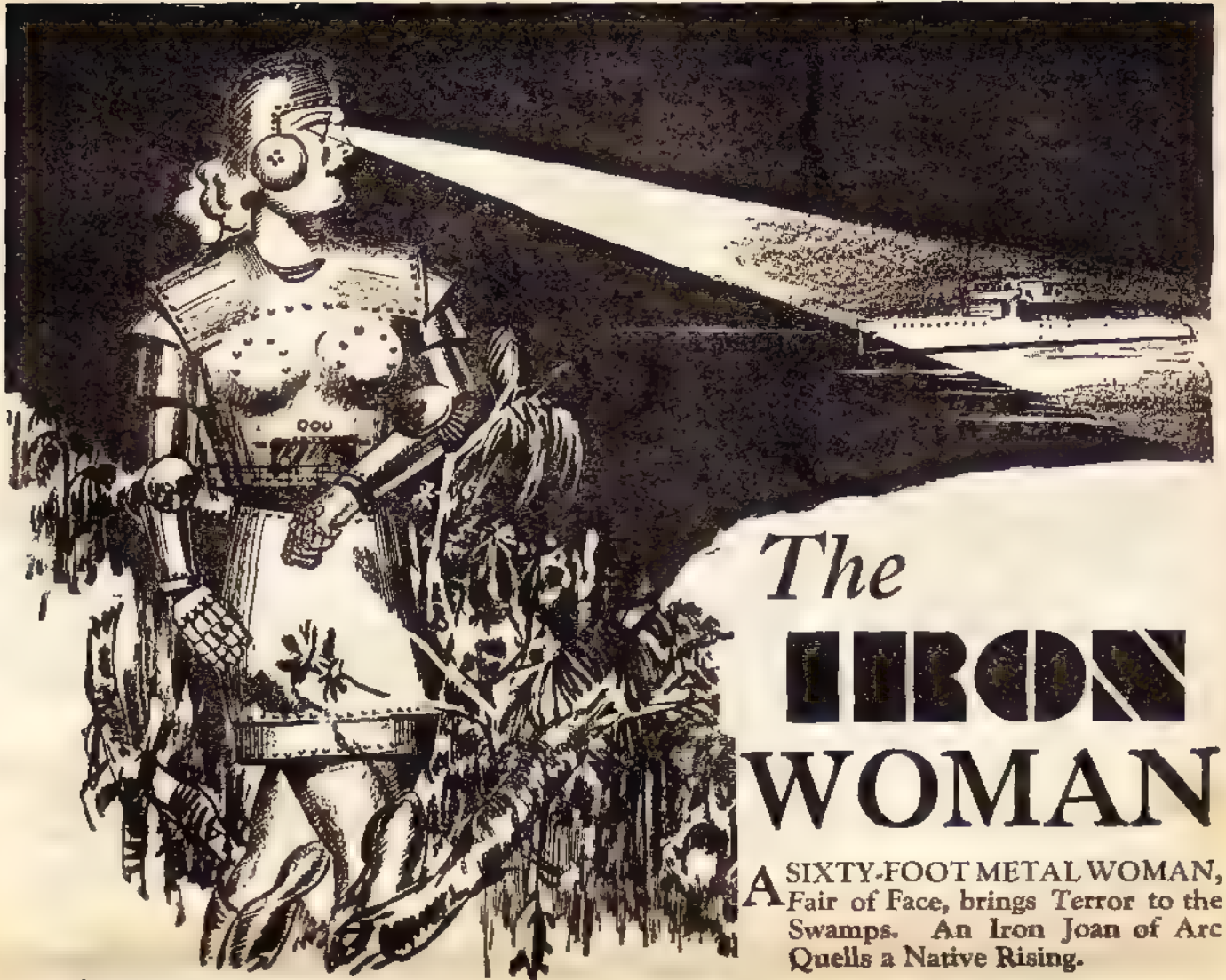
Sea Flight beckoned to them to follow quickly.

Devilman has been fooled again, he said, "and now I will show you the beginning of a way back to your world."

"You cannot escape," demanded Stanmore eagerly.

"No, my friend. There is a way, a subtle way that leads from this domain and rises towards South America. Somewhere there you will find an opening into a world which I cannot follow you. It is but a hundred miles from here to the coast."

More startling adventures among the ghastly denizens of the undersea world. The mighty God of war strides through the depths. Read next week's powerful story of the Devilman of the Deep.



The IRON WOMAN

A SIXTY-FOOT METAL WOMAN, Fair of Face, brings Terror to the Swamps. An Iron Joan of Arc Quells a Native Rising.

★ THE COLOSSUS OF THE ISLAND

THE early, broad-shouldered bos'n of the *Meran Rover* leaned over the rail, his mahogany face turned towards the rugged coast of Fang Island, which lay off the starboard quarter.

It was only a little after dawn, and in the misty light the island looked grim and mysterious. In the background the desolate Welsh coast was even more vague.

Preston Thomson, the third engineer, standing beside the bos'n, was intrigued. Why had Garston Grand's magnificent yacht anchored off this lonely island on a spring dawn? And what was that vast structure of steel scaffolding and wood which reared itself seventy feet into the air from the centre of the island?

Ever since Thomson had joined the stowaway company of the *Meran Rover* he had been thrilled. For those who served the famous millionaire never knew what he was going to do next.

Every officer aboard the yacht, and every member of the crew, was alone in the world. That was one condition of employment. The vessel was their home; they had no other, and no ties ashore.

"What is it?" asked Thomson.

"Ax me another," returned Ben, the bos'n. "That there tower is a mystery, sonny. But if G. G. does a thing it's right. Ye've only been with us for a couple of voyages, but I've served Garston Grand for twenty years, and he's the finest man as ever drew breath!"

"Glad you have such a good opinion of

me, Ben," interrupted a smooth, cheerful voice.

Ben Barley swung round, his jaw agape.

Hastily he saluted.

"So help me, Chief, I didn't mean to take no liberties," he stammered. "It's all on account of young Mr. Thomson here, asking me his fool questions."

"He is not the only one aboard who is curious," said Garston Grand, a twinkle in his eyes.

He, too, was looking at the island, and he stood there motionless.

Six foot to an inch, the millionaire was broad in proportion, his strong, kindly face was clear shaven, and his eyes were as steady as crystal quartz, and at times they could be as hard.

Who had not heard of Garston Grand, millionaire adventurer, racing motorist—he held the world's speed record—explorer, hunter? The newspapers called him "The Man of a Thousand Adventures," and the newspapers were right.

Two years of striving, two years of ceaseless work, he said softly. "Dirk will be elated this morning." His expression hardened. "If all goes well, the wonder creature, hidden by that scaffolding and woodwork will soon be off on a mission of peace and good adventure."

Altogether he turned to the young engineer.

"I have a special job for you, Thomson," he went on, his voice becoming crisp. "Come with me."

Five minutes later the yacht's powerful motor boat was speeding towards a rocky cove in the island, where there was a jetty—tiny, but strong.

At the top of the steps stood a tall, lean man with bony, lantern-jawed features.

This was Dirk Metcalf, the millionaire's chief engineer, a man who lived for nothing but machinery.

"Ready for us, Dirk?" asked Garston Grand as he sprang ashore.

"It's for you to give the word, G. G.," replied Dirk Metcalf, in short, staccato accents. "She's gone through her trials O.K., and she's the world's eighth wonder!"

They walked inland, towards the great structure which towered skywards like the covering of some lonely monument. Garston Grand had invested fifty thousand sterling in the thing of steel which was hidden by this woodwork scaffolding, and Garston Grand, for all his millions, did not invest money recklessly.

Soon they stood beneath the structure. Two great doors were open, and the early morning sunshine gleamed upon an intricate creation of shimmering metal—an Iron Woman!

Even Garston Grand was so lost in wonder that he faltered, arrested by the staring sight. Preston Thomson gasped.

"It works?" asked the millionaire bluntly.

"It works, G. G.—as no man-made Robot ever worked before," replied the engineer.

The Iron Woman reared her steel helmeted head nearly sixty feet into the air. The monster creation of metal was a perfectly proportioned representation of a woman in action. Like a colossal Joan of Arc.

She had legs of shimmering steel, with feet measuring ten feet from toe to foot. Her arms hung naturally, and at her waist there was an opening, protected by a chromium rail.

Above breast plates gleamed. The face, almost human in its expression, was full of

The Rising of the Natives

repose, with perfectly proportioned features. The eyes were great blights of incredible power.

Preston Thomson eagerly followed the millionaire into the shed. He was strangely excited, and congratulated himself on having been chosen for this special duty. Staring immediately beneath the metal glasses, he felt strangely dwarfed.

"This way, Chief," said Dirk briefly.

He pressed a hidden switch in the right leg, and metal rings automatically appeared, up which the engineer climbed with ease. Garston Grand followed, and Preston Thomson brought up the rear.

Within a minute they were at the Iron Woman's waist, and on the safe side of the chironium rail. Preston saw a chamber of considerable size, containing many dials and levers. He knew, then, that this central chamber must be the control room.

"No need to show you the gadgets, O. G.," said Dirk Metcalf. "Everything's set. When I get back to the yacht I'll give you a call. Then you can try her out for yourself."

Without another word he went down the ladder, and Preston, full of questions yet without the nerve to put them, looked through a grate in the flooring, where he caught a glimpse of gleaming machinery.

"No, there's no engine-room, Thomson," said Garston Grand, as though reading his thoughts. "Driving motors and machinery yes. But if a 'vessel' of this type were to carry her own motive power, it would be as cumbersome as she would be robbed of any possible utility."

"Do you mean to say that she can't walk, sir?" asked the young engineer respectfully. "It so weak to be motive power?"

"A word, the *Iron Woman*," replied Garston Grand, who was looking towards the yacht. "An enormous amount of great force has been installed, and its power can be transmitted without wires to the motors within the Iron Woman."

In a word, the heavy, bulky machinery is carried on the yacht and without the motor ship the Iron Woman cannot operate. It is a total of remote control, and indeed one of the latest developments of modern transmission. But here we are transmitting it and not power. Yet, as you see, it works."

Preston saw the motor boat reach the yacht, and a minute later Dirk Metcalf had climbed aboard, and was standing beside him within the Iron Woman. Looking down through the grate in the control room floor, he saw that there were many lights, rods, too—gleaming rods, pistons, gear-wheels. . . .

"Look out," said Garston Grand briefly.

He was on the control lever, and Preston was irresistibly reminded of an electric train. Just as that train, which gets its power from the overhead wire, the Iron Woman was getting her power by invisible waves from the yacht.

He leaned over the gleaming rail and below saw the great steel legs moving deliberately, with powerful strides. The body swayed rhythmically to the motion.

The Iron Woman moved out of her shell, and then commenced a circuit of the little island. Serenely, she strolled over grassland and rocks. Garston Grand directed her to work a clump of stunted trees and she went clanking through like an all-conquering Juggernaut.

"So good. Thomson is mighty good," said the millionaire, his eyes gleaming. "She can be operated up to a distance of ten miles from the yacht. Dirk tells me that he'll be able to increase the range of power to fifty miles, where only. But ten is sufficient for our present purpose."

What is our present purpose, sir?" asked Preston.

"I'll tell you that later," replied the millionaire. "I shall need your engineering knowledge. For Dirk must remain at the controls."



The Iron Woman stooped, lifted the two canoes, and, eyes gleaming, hurled them back into the waters of the swamp.

"I don't see what you can do with a creation of this sort, sir," objected Preston, who possessed a practical mind. "Did you notice how we smashed our way through those trees just now?"

"Yes, and I was pleased," said Garston Grand calmly. "Of course, for use in any civilized country the Iron Woman is impossible. She would destroy roads, tear up telegraph wires and electric cables, and create thousands of pounds worth of damage in the shortest of journeys. But as a means of traveling in wild unexplored country so long as she is within the radius of her controlling power there is no limit to the Iron Woman's possibilities."

As proof of this he directed the monster's footsteps to the very sea itself, and, to Preston's amazement, she plunged out towards the yacht. The water was not very deep in spots, and thus the Iron Woman could walk right up to the side of the yacht. Dirk Metcalf was waiting at the rail.

"Get your gear going, Dirk, and ship her aboard," said the millionaire. "We leave at once."

Later, Garston Grand collected the men

together. They stood lined up on deck, Preston Thomson among them, the bare-faced men who had faithfully served their common employer for years.

"Now there's work for us," said Garston Grand, in his direct way. "Perhaps you've heard rumors of the trouble with the Senegalese on the West Coast of Africa? The natives have revolted and set up a Republic. The President is the Senegalese chief, an arrogant rascal known as Ologo. His first act was to murder the British Commissioner at Saint Port and capture every white trader. These unfortunate men have been taken far inland, where they are kept as hostages."

"What's the Navy doing, sir?" broke in Preston impulsively. "Why doesn't a battleship go out there?"

"Because there are peculiar geographical difficulties," replied the millionaire. "The extreme coastline of the Senegalese is flat, with dense jungle growing almost to the water's edge. The sea is so small that even the coldest trading steamers are compelled to anchor three miles off shore."

Two weeks ago a British warship sent her gunboats and machines ashore, and the

Iron Woman Stands Helpless

"Get Obogo if you can!" he shouted, with evil fury. "Get me if you can!"

"Destroy the town, Thomson," said Garston Grand grimly. "Obogo and his people need a lesson."

Almost before he had ceased speaking the Iron Woman was in movement; she strode forward, and the result was staggering.

With every stride, the steel giantess crushed her feet through the native huts. The buildings were shattered and trampled and reduced to matchwood. "Nonsense," said the European. "The natives are not warlike." The native town of Sisilolo was razed to the ground and the result was a sight of five hundred.

The Iron Woman was now in the open.

★THE PERIL OF THE SWAMP

MARCHING inland now, the Iron Woman was taking the jungle in her stride. Trees were crashing before her steady steps. Through the forest stretched a grim trail of destruction.

"We march on—to Sisilolo," said Garston Grand. "That is the chief town of Obogo's tribe and there, no doubt, we shall find the British prisoners. We must reach them before the infuriated natives can do them further harm."

From his high elevation, it was possible to see for many miles over the forests. Presently, a wide lake, with stagnant water, appeared. The Iron Woman did not alter her course; she plunged straight on.

And then, gradually, the mighty strides of the giantess became slower, her great legs of steel sank deeper and deeper into the lake, and Preston, at the controls, set his jaw grimly. "The lake was no more but a boiling, some swamp—a dreadful mass of boiling glutinous mud."

It was a dramatic moment when the Iron Woman halted. There she stood, practically in mid-lake, sunk nearly to her knees. The vile water, infested with reptiles, was not more than thirty feet below the deck.

"We're bogged, sir," said Preston, with concern. "She won't shift."

Garston Grand spoke into the microphone which communicated by radio with the yacht.

"More power, Dirk," he said urgently.

"Can't be done, Chief," came Dirk's voice, as clearly as though he were present. "She's getting the maximum out of it. Anything wrong?"

"We're stuck in a bog," he said, replied the Iron Woman. "What do you suggest?"

"Lower the gear," said the Dirk Met. "It's your only chance, G. G. Preston knows what to do. Get me busy on the job and meanwhile, I'll send a launch or the boys ashore to help."

The young engineer, having heard Dirk's advice, lost no time in getting to work.

It was the first setback, and the effect upon the stalwart pan in the Iron Woman was considerable. They had believed her to be all-conquering; yet she had proved herself to be vulnerable, like every other man-made machine, to the ingenuity of Nature.

What if the Iron Woman could not be freed from the tenacious grip of this festering swamp? No machine on earth could drag that colossal monster free; she must rely upon her own efforts or become a rusty wreck. And as the minutes passed it was seen that the level of the water was creeping gradually nearer.

The Iron Woman in short was slowly but surely sinking, failing deeper and deeper into the sticky clutches of the swamp mud.

MARK VEESSE seized the chance which chance had never believed possible.

Obogo and his blasted Republican Army must be rounded up!" he said tensely. "Kassner, get the native telegraphs going! Have signal fires lighted. That infernal Iron Woman has got stuck—beaten by the first

mind swamp she tried to cross! Don't you see how we can benefit?"

How?" asked Kassner bluntly.

"Use your brains if you've got any," snapped Veesse. "The natives think the Iron Woman is a kind of ghost. But if we can show the fools that it's only a bit of machinery, cranked by whites, they'll lose their awe."

As the tropical twilight turned very swiftly into night, Mark Veesse made his preparations. He managed to get in touch with "President Obogo," and soon the scattered tribesmen were being collected together by means of their own mysterious, secret signals.

Under the cover of darkness, hundreds of canoes were made ready, and in every canoe there was a machine-gun—for Veesse had supplied the natives with plenty of arms.

The night had come down inky black, with a breath of wind stirring the water. The air was sultry and oppressive.

The swamp lay like a vast pool and leathery pool of poison, only an occasional saw-birding the movement of an alligator, or the sadder reptile.

And in the midst, still helpless, stood the Iron Woman.

Now and then, drew the circle of deadly canoes. Out of the darkness they came, creeping, edging ever closer.

And then, suddenly, a wild light glared on from the Iron Woman's deck. Her eyes had come to life!

Shrieks and screams arose from the canoes. The sight was terrifying. In the reflected light the Iron Woman stood out in all her majesty, her eyes blazing with wrath.

Both her motions and arms reached out together; they dipped, and the steel legs gripped the canoes which were then with terror-stricken natives.

Up went her arms, higher and higher; and then, with a crash, from Garston Grand's two legs, palms were extended, and canoes and men went hurtling down into the black waters of the lake.

Not a shot was fired from the Iron Woman's giant weapons, for Garston Grand was still determined, if possible, to avoid bloodshed. Some of the British machine guns opened a spattering, machine fire, but for the most part the canoes turned tail and fled.

"Better call it a day, Veesse," said Al Rogan bluntly. "We're all washed up!"

"Not yet," retorted Veesse, his eyes ablaze. "Have you forgotten that?"

He pointed vaguely to a rising hill close at hand, the only high ground for miles. On it stood a great squat storage tank.

"I don't get you," said Kassner, staring.

"Then listen," said Veesse. "That tank contains thousands of gallons of petrol—normally used by the traders' tenters and motor-boats. It's stored up here because of the big. There are pipes here leading in all directions. . . . But why talk? If we put some high explosive against that tank and let it off, what will be the result? The petrol will catch fire—and pour, in a cascade into the lake! And then. . . . Haven't you fools got any imagination?"

★IN THE PATH OF THE FLAMES

"A MY hope yet?" asked Garston Grand, as the canoes came and steady.

"Give me another ten minutes, sir," said Preston. "And without another word he went on with his work."

Garston Grand had come down into the wonderful engine room where Preston Thomson was at work. He was making the alterations to the gearing, so that greater power could be concentrated on the Iron Woman's lower limbs. For the lower the gear, the greater the power—although speed, of course, would be sacrificed.

Garston Grand knew better than to question Preston further. The millionaire went up again to the deck. All was quiet. The British natives had gone and the swamp lake was black and silent.

How do you know about Obogo's?"

A great flare of ruddy light shot skyward; then, all in a flash, it spread, leaping up to an unbelievable height, and it seemed that the flames were working down in the lake, spreading, widening. . . .

The blackness of the night was shattered. The whole lake was illuminated in that ruddy glow, every tree on its banks seemed on a new relief. Birds by the thousands and forest creatures added to the uproar.

Preston came up, full of inquiry.

"The lake's on fire!" said Garston Grand. "What are you waiting for?"

"If you ask me, it's a good idea," said the millionaire grimly.

"By Heaven, you're right," snapped Garston Grand. "Look! It's coming! It's coming with the speed of an express train! Petrol blazing petrol, sailing over the entire lake! Buck for your life!"

"Clang-rung!"

As though by magic, steel shutters shot down from the warehouse of the Iron Woman, closing it completely.

Mark Veesse, watching from a safe distance, laughed with colossal triumph. He saw the flames haying long, he saw them surround the Iron Woman, and a leap over her shimmering metal sides, reaching over her shoulders, and playing to fatal lengths and her majestic head.

"Well, that'll finish 'em!" he said evilly. "They'll be roasted alive. There's no escape for the Iron Woman—she's bogged, and can't move an inch."

"Can't move?" roared Al Rogan, pointing. "She's moving!"

In that moment of dread, just when Preston Thomson's steady labours had been rewarded.

Mark Veesse watched wildly. Through the lake of fire, the Iron Woman slowly but surely began to rise out of the burning mud. The whole vast body swayed at the same time; then the other leg moved, and the air was filled with a dreadful "glug-glug-glug" as the steel legs were drawn unerringly out of the swamp.

Now, with every measured stride, the Iron Woman was coming ashore.

"Beaten—beaten at the last moment!" muttered Mark Veesse. "Another half-hour and —"

He broke off, for it seemed that the earth quake was taking place. The ground beneath him began quivering and shaking and suddenly a very propitious one, which had his own companions stood together, shining away.

"The lake—the fire!" screamed Kassner. It was the Iron Woman who had caused this unexpected horror.

Striding out of the lake, her great weight and bulk had indeed caused a miniature earthquake. A channel was formed where, a second previously, there had been solid ground. And the lake waters came rushing through, carrying on their surface the thin of blazing petrol. . . .

One moment the three crooks were there—the next moment the flames had roared up round them, over them, and they were no more.

Through the jungle walked the Iron Woman, her searchlights blazing. Chief Obogo was seen, at picked up, and, babbling with fear, that once-proud "president" made a complete surrender.

In the hope of clemency from the British authorities he offered to release the imprisoned traitors at once; and the Iron Woman, advancing to Sisilolo, caused further terror amongst the interior natives. Sisilolo was captured without a life being lost and all the British prisoners were freed and taken aboard.

The adventure was over—and the Iron Woman, on her first mission into the wilds, had achieved a brilliant success.

But that was merely the first of a long series of stirring adventures for Garston Grand's Iron Woman!

VOICE *from* the VOID

The gleaming finger of the searchlight caught the little yacht—held it. . . . While Jimmy clung to the tiller, battling against wind and waves. Then a shell whined through the darkness.

As he passed through the narrow alleyway, he was surprised when they saw his large and gleaming Phantom. Roshatti knew with a flash through Daraburgh's narrow and ancient streets that they had found the quarry.

Jim and Mr. Hicks were talking to Jim's brother, Fred, and Alton, the money was paying round the rigging of the boat.

Alfred had become extremely attached to the boatman and had entirely deserted Jimmy, signifying this when Jimmy encountered him by taking two apples, one at Jimmy and one at Mr. Bix's boat, with a friendly accuracy and great politeness.

So Jimmy had decided to make the boatman a present of Adams, a gift which afforded all parties immense satisfaction. It must be recalled that Adams had always been a sailor's monkey and that he was so to speak, therefore, a son of the sea and at home on boats. It was better for him to remain so.

Jimmy had rescued the nukes from a notorious end when he had first engaged on his strange adventures, but had found it no easy task to give him into the care of the Vatican when he had gone long off to Paris.

For Jimmy was on ~~some~~ ~~the~~ vice work,
and ~~his~~ adventures and carried him halfway
across Europe.

that of a few some weeks before he had consulted his uncle Lord Blandwater, the Foreign Secretary, and as a result had been sent searching for a Phantom Ship that had been seen on the Essex coast of the Thames estuary and to investigate at a age gassy of a Voice a mysterious Voice that spoke out of Nowhere.

He has seen the Phantom Ship a
 number of times and has been told that it
 disappeared about 1900.

ness. He will lead the Voice to a Voice from the World that can reach a Voice, the most long and the most precious and the most valuable.

I'm Jimmy had not Mrs. Bess a right
last and winter was staying on the coast
for the good of his health

A stray shot on the saltings, intended for Jimmy had caught Mr. Bilks's bowler hat, and the incident had cemented the friendship. "Arry Bilks was in" on the adventure.

his actions had sent them to France, and into far Arabia, but now they were back in Daneburgh, waiting for anything that might happen.

And at that time Broggerman had taken a house in Daneburgh, too . . . Broggermann, the warmonger to whom the Voice had first spoken.

Broggermann strolled along the harbour now, an imposing figure in white flannels, in double-breasted blue coat, and a peaked cap. He had all the Prussian's love of uniform or semi-uniform, and with his magnificent physique, his large, strong nose, with its redless membrane, he was certainly most impressive.

Behind him loomed another man. He was a lean, broad-shouldered person with a hard, relentless face and something of a swagger in his gait. Bruggemann's bodyguard always carried a gun, and was always ready to use it.

Then out at sea something appeared, coming from the south wheeling beautifully across the sunlit waters, now lifted above the curve of the two seemingly solid white-capped waves which swept away towards the stopped stein.

A great cruising motor boat was coming towards them at speed, and the boat man, suddenly interested, said she was doing forty knots if she was doing one.

She slackened speed off the tiny balcony, and, handled frantically, came stumbling towards me. She was pure white with a single stripe about her and her hair and dress scrubbed to the same milky colour. All her

the 2 were "completely" and "entirely" correct. As a result, the 2 sailing speed, so belonged to Broome.

Two men came from the saloon, and
whirlwase as Ritzgermann stepped
ward, and he greeted them without any
attempt at secrecy, so that Jimmy and Mr.
Bokes heard their names.

Hallo, Smith Hallo, van Steven 1 n
glad you were able to make the 11. 21 p
a. l right Wallis 9 11

The skipper saluted stiffly.
"Aye, aye, sir. Splendid. For five in
the West Sea."

"Das ist gut," smiled Bräuermann.
"Well, when you come up to the house,
gentlemen? Well, you'll sleep sound."

You will order supplies ashore and present a weekly account, as usual. This way,

They got into the car and drove in the Manor House. The last of the visitors had gathered together, the last of those for whom who had sat round the secret table above the Kurfürstendamm in Berlin on that fateful night when, for the first time, men heard the Voice from the Void.

Jimmy and Mr. Binks would have sailed off, but the boatman did one of those small things which often change the destinies of men. He leaned over the side of his boat and talked to Wallis.

"One of the finest I've seen."

The supper bread. He was proud of it
up, and pleased that somebody, and a
her

"Yes, Cowes built."

"That gentleman who came aboard. Mr. Broggemann. He's a German. One of the richest men in the world. I believe."

I'm a poor speaker, vaguely a poet at 17, as do lots of poor people.

Did you hear that? asked I, excitedly. "The name. I mean! The name."

A Murderer Waits on the Shore

them. The searchlight still flayed the waters. It was operated with skill, and it left hardly a yard of the running waves untouched.

So, at last, in its glazing brilliance a spot of fleeting white showed, and was lost . . . but was picked up again. . . .

Broggerman had been located.

★ 'ARRY STOPS ONE!

HE was running at terrific speed all out, Jimmy thought—doing more than fifty land miles an hour, but the light nee'd him, and, from the midst of the luminous mass that moved so fantastically over the sea a great red tongue of flame shot out and vanished amid a cloud of smoke.

To their ears, rolling through the wind, came the deep-throated boom of a gun.

They saw the water kick high a fathom to starboard of the big motor-boat.

"They're shelling him!" gasped Jimmy.

"I say, this is murder!"

"I said that long ago," declared Mr. Bilks.

"Anything to do with boats is murder, if you ask me."

The motor boat had turned on her heel and was bolting south like a madman. She wanted to get out of the radius of that scorching light, and away from that deadly gun, one shot from which would spit her in twain and send her to the bottom.

As she ran she twisted and turned in all directions, leaving a wide and tortuous wake, most of which showed in the glare of the searchlight.

She was a difficult mark, but the gunner was a good one. Once more the gun boomed. A shell dropped just astern of her, and the spray and uplift of its explosion momentarily hid her from view.

Then she leapt into sight again, running like mad on a straight course. The searchlight was not showing her quite so distinctly. Nothing could hold a ship with the speed of an express train, and the Phantom Ship was doing her.

The gun boomed for the third time. The searchlight stepped just ahead. The gunner's aim was good. The ga-ging speed was emphasised. Oh, a lucky shot might ever get home on the white projectile as it hurtled over the dark waters.

The searchlight strove vainly to hold her. It lost her and suddenly it flicked out. The white motor boat had run to safety and, within a minute or two, must be back in the search.

And, with this, the Phantom Ship vanished.

Mr. Bilks forgot his alarming privations, his thoughts of steak and beer and cheese, and the snugness of the Flying Saucer's bar parlour, as the phenomenon manifested itself before his gaze.

Where a grotesque horror had moved over the dark waters nothing now showed at all. Where strange lights had shown, no lights were visible. If the Phantom Ship had gone to the bottom of the sea she could not have disappeared with more completeness.

"Well," he gasped, "if that don't beat everything. It's a submarine. That's what it is. A blessed submarine. And it immerses every time it wants to vanish."

"Submerges is the word," said Jimmy, staring seawards.

"I don't care what the word is," said Mr. Bilks with grand indifference. "But that's what it is."

"I don't think it's a submarine," replied Jimmy. "Though the idea is a very sound one. 'Arry. Anyhow, we'd better get tack, hadn't we?"

"I thank you for those few nuts," said Mr. Bilks. "The sooner the better. I've got wet pants and they're uncomfortable if you don't know it already. About six and a half in the ocean wave says you. More like death to me, but I suppose that don't matter to anybody."

He set their little boat round, and, set a steady course southward.

They were running in a deep water channel, which, for purposes mentioned already in this chronicle—purposes of secrecy—must be nameless. It was one of those deep water channels off our east coast which any good sailing chart will show you.

Of course, they didn't know it was a deep water channel. The sea was deep all over as far as they were concerned. They had no idea that this section of the North Sea was as complicated in its thoroughfares as a great city.

On they went. Ahead of them, dimly visible in the darkness, moved a vast mass, slowly, majestically.



Something hit Mr. Bilks' bowler hat—sent it flying from his head. A murderer was waiting in the darkness.

They heard the steady drone of great engines beating her speed. Right up, many feet above them, they had a vision of broad masses of white, where a ship's superstructure peered above her hull.

She showed no lights, this big, majestic ship. She swung her stern broadside towards the water with no warning of her presence. She passed on through the darkness, picking her way with the silence bestowed on an expert hand on her steering wheel.

Jimmy put his finger over his eyes. The great ship moved up to them. They saw the immense light of her bowering nose. Her main blunderbuss, main canvas and their little craft swirled and eddied away, the sails flapping idly.

They were right up alongside the ship, drifting bow-ward, starboard side. The ship was sliding on. She seemed endless in her length, merciless in her height. They bobbed and dipped along her side like a cork.

So Lucy reached her stem, where her poppers, near the surface—for she ran light-

flushed the waters and made them boil frantically.

Jimmy strained his eyes, staring upwards. He had a momentary glimpse of something on the rounded stern—a line of comparatively small markings over which paint had been slashed. But paint does not always cover the things on which it is imposed. They have first to be erased. . . .

The ship went on. The wind was filling their sails once more, and they were bowing southwards.

Jimmy burst out excitedly: "'Arry, I saw some letters which had not been properly covered up. Difficult to see in the dark, so I might be mistaken. They were: E . . . I . . . T . . . A. The name of the ship, eh? Part of the name. Now, if we could find a ship with a name that fits into those letters we might have solved the mystery, I think."

They held their course. They made no effort to right their lamps, and so they ran into Dandel's hard lightless. They hitled up. Made sure all was secure, that the sails were lashed down as well as they, in their darkness, were able to lash them, and, with strange noises of relief issuing from Mr. Bilks, stepped ashore.

And as they did so they heard a curious little plop from the shadows of the great old tarred shack which the boatman used for the storing of their tackle, and which stood just off the pier about twenty yards away.

Something hit Mr. Bilks' bowler hat (for he had been to see in that strange headgear) with a crash, and down to the stones he went, Jimmy beside him.

For this was attempted murder, and the murderer carried a silenced pistol, and sat in the shadows.

Another long and thrilling instalment of this powerful serial will appear in SCOOPS next week. Don't miss it.

HERE'S A SCOOP...

A Weekly Review mainly about Our-
selves and of the Wonders of the
World of To-day and To-morrow

Experts Said "Impossible" —They Did It!

IT is the unfortunate failing of many ex-
perts that the greatest use to which they
put their knowledge is to say "No" or
"Impossible," to suggestions which less
well informed people make to them.

Illustrated was Henry Ford, the motor
manufacturer, with wet blanket helpers of that
type that he made it a rule not to get an
outside expert on the job, because, as
he declared, "they could all give me two
hundred sound reasons why it couldn't be
done." Then his straight-thinking helpers
went ahead and finished the job.

Thomas Alva Edison, the greatest inven-
tor who ever lived, hated to be called a
"Scientist." He always declared he was
"just an inventor," and, indeed, many
"scientists" would hardly have given him
a job, for his arithmetic was poor and many
theories left him floundering.

He always found the solution to any
problem put before him, his straight think-
ing succeeding where theories failed.

Now four British men have confounded
the experts by fitting a radio set to an
open lifeboat.

Because the lifeboat was under water most
of the time and owing to the nearness of
the motor, the men first said it could not
be done.

But the four men—they came from Hythe,
in Kent—progressed through many failures,
and at last their boat has a set secured in
one corner. It is only a receiver at the
moment, and the operator has to have a
very long plug-in lead attached to allow for
the tossing of the tiny boat.

But already directions radioed to the life-
boat have been the means of saving three
lives.

Empire Air Day This Year?

EMPIRE DAY—May 24—this year will
also be Empire Air Day if the present
plans are carried out, and for the first time
the people of Britain will be able to see
something of their own R.A.F. at close
quarters.

The Air League of the British Empire has
been planning such an event for some time,
and now there seems the possibility that the
Government will co-operate in the scheme.

Almost every branch of the R.A.F. work
and equipment, from the latest type of
"planes to a new type of flying suit, will be
demonstrated for the benefit of the public,
and if the plans mature, certain aerodromes
will be thrown open to the public for the
day.

Vegetarians Can't be High Flyers!

NEARLY every Japanese airman, military
or civil, who attempts to fly at what
would seem quite normal heights to us,
suffers dangerous attacks of vertigo and loses
complete control of his machine.

The reason is a human one.

As the Japanese are almost totally vege-
tarian there are few meat-eating pilots in
their ranks. And now the experts solemnly
declare that it takes a meat-eating pilot to
control an aircraft in the upper regions of the
atmosphere.

And we have already explained in *SCOOPS*
how the top speed of cars is going to be
definitely limited owing to the fact that after
a comparatively low speed a driver is past
his light before his brain can transmit the
order to his hands to steer round it.

The machine's progress—but the human
element seemingly stays the same.

Putting Discovery Straight

POLAR exploration has already reached
an advanced stage, particularly since the
employment of planes for expeditionary
work, and almost every year some new land
is discovered. 'Princess Astrid Land' was
a recent discovery of a Scandinavian
expedition.

Yet there are countless inaccuracies in
form and outline which have still to be
cleared up in connection with the already-
discovered territories.

It is in an attempt to clear up some of
the outstanding problems in Antarctic dis-
covery that a British Antarctic Expedition
is to leave England in September.

The expedition, consisting of fourteen men
led by J. H. Rymill of the recent Watkins
Greenland Expedition, will travel to the
Antarctic in a 120-ton ship, and will
make reconnaissance by sledge and
aeroplane over several ice continents.

Among those to be visited are
Greenland, Frost Land, and
Claret Island. The
party hope to return
to England in May,
1937.

The cost of this
ambitious project is
estimated at £15,000,
to which the Govern-
ment is contributing
£10,000.

This is a matter of
putting Discovery's
"house in order."

They've Taken the Tickle Out of Wool

A RESEARCH Association run by the
Woollen Industries has produced a
means whereby wool is made unshrinkable
and also "non-tickling."

Great as the first advantage undoubtedly
is, the second should have a larger effect on
the sales of certain woollen garments for
so many people who dislike the prickly effect
of wool which next to their skin.

Another advantage of this new discovery is
that the treatment adds lustre to the wool.

The method is being kept a close secret.

for the benefit of the members of the Asso-
ciation, but it is believed that electricity
plays a big part in the process.

The Fuel of the Future

A MOTOR CAR, with its own charcoal
gas-producing plant to take the place
of petrol is now on the streets.

It can be distinguished from an ordinary
vehicle only by the gas-producing plant,
about the size of a suitcase, carried on the
running board.

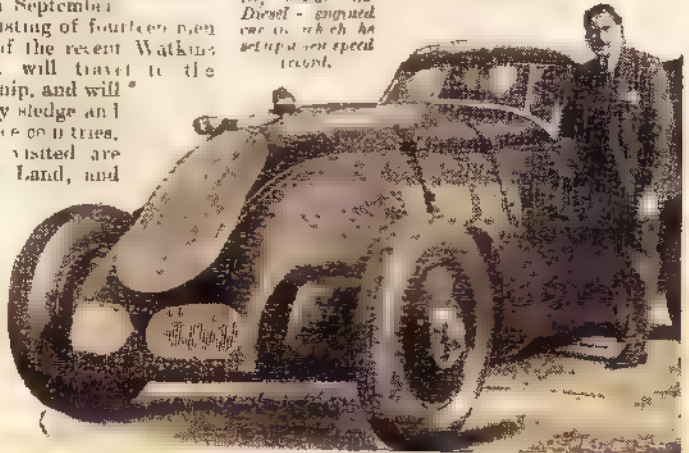
The charcoal gas runs fifty miles on
a single charging of charcoal, the recharging
taking up a matter of a few minutes, and
its fuel cost is about half that of a similar
model running on petrol. The engine has
not required any alterations, and could use
petrol at desired.

A wood and paper fire is lit and then char-
coal is sprinkled on a red-hot grid above
the fuel. It combines with oxygen in the
air to form an inflammable gas. Now a drip
of water falls on to the gas and enriches it.

Then the gas passes through a purifying
container from which it is drawn to the
engine.

The amount of charcoal
which is available for burn-
ing is controlled from the
driver's seat.

Captain G. E. T.
Eyston, the famous
British motorist,
has made the
Diesel engine
run on which he
set up a new speed
record.



But the Diesel type of engine may keep
the charcoal burner from ever becoming a
serious rival. When Captain George Eyston
set up a new speed record for an engine
car at 115 m.p.h. he used a streamlined
saloon car fitted with a 6-cylinder A.E.C. oil
engine, similar to those in London's buses.

All of the record runs were carried out
at a fuel cost of sixpence, and the oil bill
for the journey from London to Paris came
to 2s.

The compression ignition engine ran per-
fectly and gave no trouble, so here is another
claimant to be the fuel of the future.

The Cave-man Returns

IT seems that some of the prophecies in the
book, *Creation's Doom*, which is reviewed
on page 299, are already well on the way to
becoming realities.

The author prophesies that cities of the
future will be built underground.

And now Professor Philip M. Backy of
Columbia, U.S.A., has perfected an instru-
ment, the "centrifuge," with which he can
gauge the force of gravitation down to a
depth of 6,000 feet and thus determine
whether it would be safe to construct vast
"caves," caves large enough to house
shops, theatres, offices; in short a subter-
ranean city.

With the temperature below ground almost
constant at 62 degrees Fahrenheit and with
our ever growing tendency towards condi-
tioned and artificial lighting, there seems
to be no reason why this project should not
be carried out.

At any rate, it's one way of solving the
housing problem!

SCOOPS



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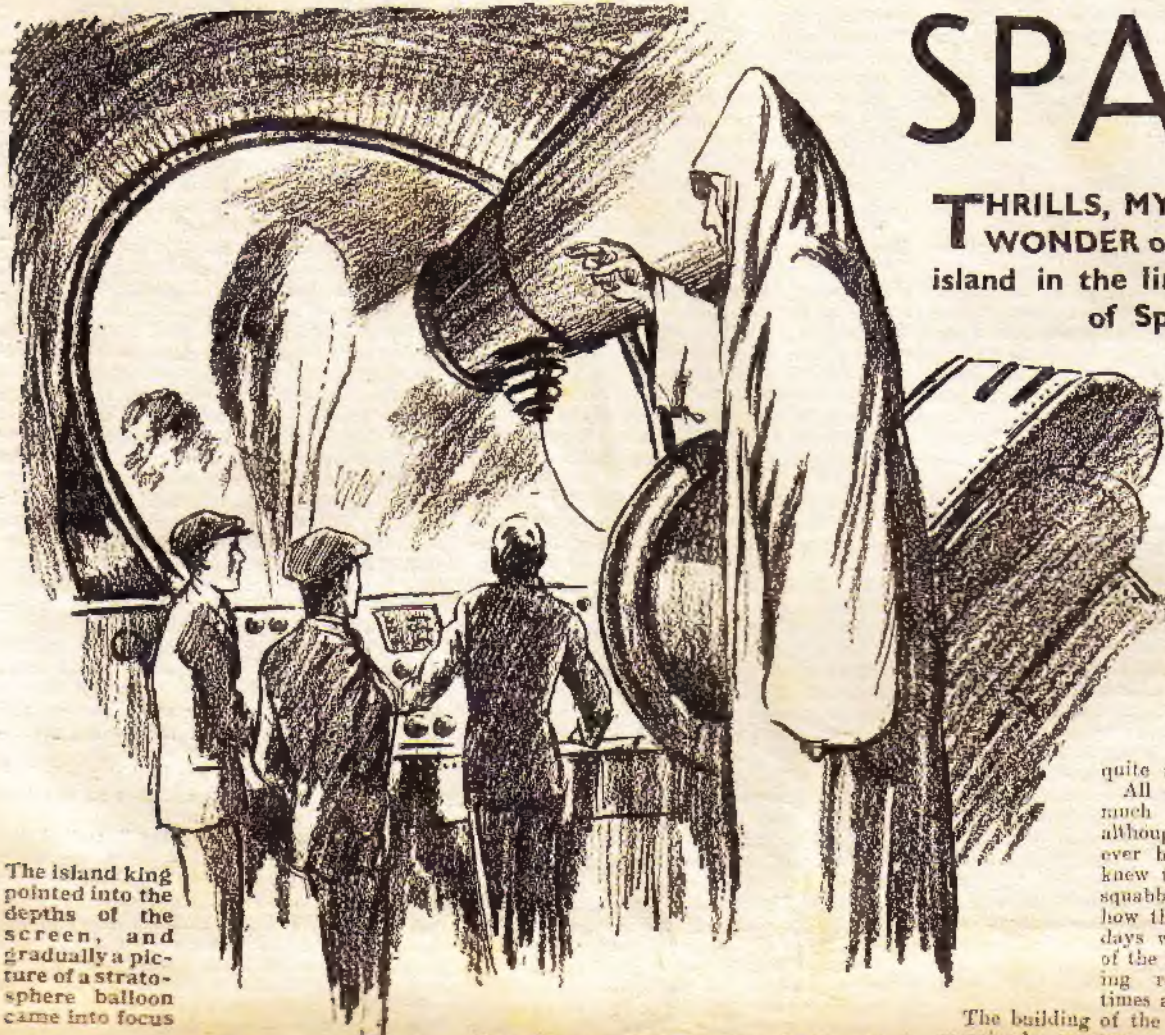
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A World-famous Scientist takes you up into—

SPACE

**THRILLS, MYSTERY AND
WONDER** on an amazing
island in the limitless realm
of Space



The island king pointed into the depths of the screen, and gradually a picture of a stratosphere balloon came into focus

★ LOOKING INTO THE PAST

ON a gigantic island floating majestically through the immensity of space a strange scene presented itself.

A giant man—twice as tall as the average human being and dressed like a monk—was striding along with three space travellers from the Earth towards a huge green mountain that towered in the centre of the island.

The three Earthmen had come to this amazing place in strange circumstances.

While on a motor-cycling holiday in England the motor-bike belonging to Victor Standish, the youngest member of the party, had suddenly conked out.

With his two companions, Peter Handley and Phillip Joyce, Victor had gone searching for a garage. They had come across a shed which housed a giant flying machine, and, curiosity overcoming them, they had investigated.

Whilst inside the big ship a clumsy movement on the part of Phillip had released the ascending valve, and, without warning, the space ship had gone hurtling upwards, carrying the shed away with it.

Professor Slater, who had built the ship *Aeronauticus* in secret, and was all ready for his great ascent into the stratosphere, had arrived just in time to see his mighty creation going up into the blue.

But his horror was nothing compared with that of the three unwilling travellers. Terror-stricken, they tried everything they could to bring the ship back to Earth; but they succeeded only in sending her screaming out into space at a thousand miles an hour.

And what a voyage! Horror and deadly peril awaited the three Earthmen on every hand. More by luck than good judgment they had escaped from the menace that came from the evil planet Mars, and had found

themselves hurtling towards a floating island of space.

Phillip had managed to land the big ship, and the three space travellers had fallen among a strange but kindly people.

They were a race of men who had given up the comforts of civilisation and had gone back to nature.

**By
PROFESSOR
A. M. LOW, D.Sc.**

The Famous Scientist and Inventor

But they were far more advanced in knowledge than the inhabitants of the Earth, and even now the king of these strange people, the Acrous, was leading the three space travellers towards the green mountain in which was housed all the wonders of the mighty civilisation.

Phillip, who was looking in amazement at the great pyramid mountain, asked the question that had been in the minds of all three Earthmen.

"Is that a natural mountain, or did you build it yourselves?" he questioned the king of space island.

The huge Acrous smiled down at them.

"Originally it was a natural mountain, although of rugged shape," he replied. "To make it suitable for our radio and astronomical purposes we set to work to smooth its sides. It is therefore a natural mountain hewn and carved into a shape rather like that of your Pyramids. You have seen the Pyramids of Egypt?"

All three started, for a moment forgetting that the king had already explained to them that he and his people knew much about the life and history of the Earth.

The island king smiled again as he noticed their sudden surprise.

"We watched the Pyramids being built through our scientific instruments. It was, for savage tribes, quite an achievement."

All three men had heard much of the Pyramids, although none of them had ever been to Egypt. They knew that learned men still squabbled on the question of how they had been built in days when there were none of the building and engineering resources of modern times available.

The building of the Pyramids had always remained a mystery.

"Do you mean, sir," asked Peter, "that you can tell us what method the ancient Egyptians used to place these mighty stones one upon the other? How could they have raised these huge masses of stone up to the topmost pinnacles of the Pyramids? Why, I believe our most powerful electric cranes could hardly do it to-day. It has always seemed to us a miraculous achievement."

"We know every detail of it," returned the king. "We watched it from our island and even took photographs of it. You shall see them now."

Within a few seconds another spave islander appeared and, bowing slightly to the king, handed him a large bundle of photographs. The man glided away into the dark recesses of the Mystery Mountain as quickly as he had appeared.

"Here are the pictures," said the big king, stooping down.

Although the three Earthmen were interested in the photos, they were, in the first place, more curious to discover how the man who had brought the photographs knew that they were required.

"Why," exclaimed Victor, "you didn't ask for them, yet they came instantly! How was that?"

The king raised his eyebrows. "By mind messages," he said in surprise. "I just asked one of my brother subjects to bring what I wanted, and here they are. I sent him a mental request."

This was getting a bit too deep for the three space travellers, so they pored over the photographs and there, sure enough, they saw the Pyramids in process of construction.

A glance at the group of photographs was enough to show them exactly how it had all been done. Instead of the structure rising from a large flat base until it finally ended in the pointed top, it seemed that one wall,

The Wonders of Space Island Mountain

or face, as it were, had been erected first by gangs of workmen using a temporary stone staircase.

Then a second, a third and a fourth slanting wall was built up, so that during one of the final phases of the building of the Pyramids, one gang of workmen were busy filling in the hollow which was to become the supporting centre, the heart of each Pyramid.

Great temporary structures of wood held the walls, or faces, in position, while the mass of boulders was dragged up the stone staircases by teams of men with ropes.

While the three men were gazing in wonder at the amazing photographs, two space islanders appeared—obviously summoned by a thought message.

"These are Earthmen," the island king told them. "I would show them the wonders of the mountain."

Without replying, the two Acons bowed and stood aside for the king and the three space flyers to pass through the cave-like entrance to the huge mountain.

★ THE BALLOONS FROM THE EARTH

"I SUPPOSE," the king asked Peter, "you are interested in radio?"

"Rather," Victor cut in eagerly.

"We discovered radio waves," said the king of the Acons, "more than five thousand years ago—five thousand of your Earth years—and we have made it our slave. Indeed, some of my subjects think it old-fashioned, and would have scrapped it among other of our scientific discoveries long ago. But wiser councils prevailed, and we still continue to experiment."

"Our radio devices," he went on, "are rather more advanced than those on the Earth planet. Many hundreds of years have passed since we first discovered television in colour, a problem which still baffles your scientists. . . . Perhaps you would like to take a look at your friends in Mars. Here they are."

As the king spoke he moved a small switch and an enormous screen glowed and flickered in front of them. Then a vivid picture of Mars came into focus upon it, and there again was the same bright red surface which the space travellers had seen before through the Televista machine in the *Aeronauticus*.

They saw the enormous entrances to the underground cities and the mighty excavations which had once been used by the Martians for storing water before they had learned how to make it chemically.

"Now I will show you Venus," said the king at last. "The planet is as dead as the Moon. . . . There is no life upon it. . . . Venus is a planet of eternal snows."

Slowly the planet came into focus and the three space flyers gasped as they saw the details in the picture.

Venus, as it was shown to them, was a planet the surface of which was covered by strange and fantastic shapes, mighty chasms and enormous mountains, at least a thousand times as high as those on the Earth.

As Phillip gazed with eager interest, he turned an enquiring look towards the king of the Acons and pointed to something moving over the face of the planet.

"Oh, yes," the king smiled; "when I said that there was no life, I meant that there was no life such as ours. There is animal life on the planet, mostly birds many times larger than the biggest airplanes you have on earth. As you can see, they are as white as the snow over which they fly, but they throw a curious shadow."

The island king made finer adjustments to the apparatus.

"It's a strange thing," he said, "that the atmosphere surrounding Venus resembles that of your Earth planet and, indeed, in some respects, that of our islands, but nevertheless no life, apart from those bird-

creatures, appears to exist there. There are no trees, either, as you see. . . . No rivers. . . . Nothing but the snow and the birds and their shadows."

The king paused suddenly.

"You are in good luck," he said.

"Watch that screen now. . . . Can you see two specks near the top right-hand corner?"

The three chums looked. At first they could see nothing, but then Phillip said: "Why, yes, there's something there, but they're only specks."

"Those 'specks,'" smiled the king, "are stratosphere balloons trying to discover the secrets of the vast spaces."

"Do you mean they are from the Earth?" asked Victor in excitement.

"I don't know," answered the king slowly.

"I will try to find out."

Slowly he manipulated the controls of the apparatus so that the picture of Venus faded out and the stratosphere balloons were brought in sharply.

"I think they are from the Earth," remarked the king. "But they're a long way off, as you see. Come and see for yourselves."

The island king moved away and beckoned the three boys to follow him into a small cubicle where there was a tiny screen.

"Here," explained the king, "we can bring in anything we want to see in closer detail, just as you on Earth enlarge a photograph or part of one more closely to inspect a particular object. The big screen gives a general picture, but we use this smaller one when we want more detail. Here it is."

As the three space adventurers watched they saw the two stratosphere balloons brought into vivid focus. They even saw the faces and clothes of those who occupied them.

A bearded man and two younger men were clearly visible on the screen, and the three friends had no doubt that they were from the Earth.

As they gazed into the screen Phillip gave a start. "Now I think of it," he said, "I remember that there were other people planning to make an ascent into the stratosphere above the Earth before Professor Slater. . . . But what about the other balloon. May we have a look at that?"

More adjustment, and then the second balloon came into the screen.

Only one man occupied this balloon, and he was of tiny stature.

"I know who that is," said Peter quickly, "although we can't see him clearly enough to recognise his face. He is Professor Smith of the Experimental Laboratory at Cambridge. He always said he would make an ascent by himself and would be the first to discover the real secrets of the stratosphere."

The island king smiled. "I'm afraid that neither of those balloons will come within a hundredth part of the measure of success you have achieved, because they are not properly designed."

"But they are quite near us," said Victor, "and seem to be coming this way."

"That may seem to be so," was the king's reply, "but actually they are many millions of miles away from us and will never get any nearer because they are simply gas bags. As a matter of fact, they are no more than a hundred miles above the Earth, and that height is useless for the purposes of investigating space."

At that moment the attention of all four was arrested by something that was happening to the first stratosphere balloon.

It appeared to be dropping at a terrific rate, and the chums saw what seemed to be a small object detaching itself from the balloon.

"What is happening?" asked Peter excitedly.

The island king paused gravely. "You are just witnessing the end of the stratosphere balloon," he said. "The gondola has broken away from the rest of the structure. . . ."

"That means that the people in it will be killed?" exclaimed Victor.

"I am afraid so," came the king's grave reply. "I am sorry, but if people who wish to venture into the stratosphere and space do not take sufficient precautions they have only themselves to blame for the consequences. The crew of that ship are falling to their death, and they will hit the earth at an appalling speed. The balloon is floating away and will probably explode."

"Yes," cried Victor. "There it goes!"

"That blue flash," continued the island king, "was the end of the balloon. . . . It has floated into stratosphere currents with which it could not cope, and the gas inside it has exploded. The Professor who designed your ship, the *Aeronauticus*—"

Phillip looked in surprise at the strange king—amazed that he knew even the name of their ship, for it was not written anywhere on the structure, but merely entered in the directions and the log-book.

Smiling again, the island king continued: "Your ship was built on sound lines and the mind behind it was a brilliantly clever one. Otherwise the ship would not have been able to withstand all the pressures, electric eccentricities and other freaks of space through which you have passed."

"It is certainly a stout ship," agreed Victor, "but what is happening to the other fellow down there?"

All four gazed intently at the screen and the picture it showed of the second stratosphere vessel.

So clearly could they see it that a number, "S. 1," painted in large letters on the balloon, were plainly visible.

"The people in that ship," smiled the king, "rather pride themselves on their achievement. By making their identity mark S. 1 they showed their intention of being first and highest in the stratosphere, and certainly the first to discover most about it. But you have beaten them easily."

Peter looked at the island king. "I'm afraid," he said, "we can take no credit for the ingenuity with which this ship was built. It was only by an accident that we are here at all, and the credit must go entirely to others."

The island king turned to the young journalist. "I am well aware of the circumstances in which your ascent into space began. It was all Professor Slater's idea, but I am sure he would be proud of you if he had known what had happened."

"But we don't even know him," blurted out Victor, "he is an entire stranger to us."

"That, too, I know," said the king, "but I am sure he will thank you when he sees you again."

Victor's eyes opened wide in surprise.

"When he sees us again?" he exclaimed. "Then you really think we can get back safely?"

"I would not say that," replied the king more quietly, "there will be hazards and uncertainties—things about which we ourselves know little or nothing, but with good luck and skilful management you might be able to do it. Certainly we shall give you every possible assistance. . . . But perhaps you would prefer to stay with us?"

The three space travellers looked uncertainly at the big king.

"This island," said Peter, "is an enchanting place and one where I am sure we could happily spend the rest of our lives, but we have our people, and, for myself, I am engaged to be married. Already they must be worried about us, dreadfully worried. I am sure you will understand."

"Why, of course I understand," replied the king, "there is no phase of human relationship on the Earth planet that I have not studied. That is why I am determined to help you."

The three space travellers meet with more startling adventures on the strange floating island of space before they attempt the return journey to Earth. Read the final chapters of Professor Low's amazing serial in next week's SCOOPS.

MODERN

Ideas that are
Making a New
World

CARRYING SHIPS IN LIFTS

A GIANT lift for ships is the latest idea for speeding up water transport in Germany.

Thirty miles from Berlin, where the River Oder meets the Hohenzollern Canal, a giant elevator has been put into service, and by means of this the change-over of vessels from the river to the canal or vice versa can be carried out in twenty minutes instead of two hours.

Ships up to 1,000 tons can be carried on the lift, and in the first place they are floated into a giant basin, which, with the water, weighs 4,300 tons.

This basin, with the ship floating inside, is then raised by means of 256 steel hawsers to the higher level or lowered to the lower one, the difference in the levels being well over 100 feet!

**** The Swedish Government is undertaking experiments with a new process for producing petrol from sawdust and peat. The method has been invented by Professor Komppa, a Finnish chemist.

STATE HELPS THE SCIENTIST

THOUGH the number of scientists engaged in industrial research do not amount to more than 2,000, their researches affect industries which have an output of £440,000,000 a year.

The scientists have proved themselves—and now the Government is going to give them further aid, with grants of money to help on their experiments.

It will be money well spent, for besides discovering many new commodities and perfecting others, the scientist seems particularly adapted for effecting saving in the costs in great undertakings.

Devices have been perfected whereby the electrical industry has saved £1,000,000 and the iron and steel industry well over that amount since the scientists got busy—and yet out of every £1,000 worth of goods produced each year the manufacturers have not had to pay their research workers more than about 7s. 6d.!

**** A new "baby" vacuum cleaner has been put on the market by the Hoover people. It is called the Dustette, weighs no more than an electric iron, and can be carried in an attaché case. It can be used as a clothes brush, for cleaning the interior of a car, or for brushing up the dog!

70 M.P.H. RAIL DANCE CARS

THAT tough old veteran, the train, has just produced another surprise to help it hold the bulk of its luxury passengers. It has introduced special "dancing cars," into which travellers can go for dancing, even though the train may be thundering along at 70 m.p.h.

The idea is being tried out in France and the dance cars will be attached to trains leaving Paris for the South of France.

Already we have the rail cruiser-train, in which passengers can cruise about all over England and Scotland, sight-seeing by day and sleeping on board the train at night as they are whirled off to their next stopping-point.

There are trains with cinemas and broadcast programmes as regular features, and there are trains for business men with dictaphones and typists in attendance.

What next?



SUPER LIFEBOATS

IN spite of the super ships—some of them as big and efficient as gigantic modern hotels—which sail the seas these days, there is still a vital need for lifeboats to go to their rescue when danger threatens.

And the lifeboats themselves are keeping ahead of the times.

Four new boats which are being built by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution this year will incorporate many improvements.

They will be known as the Light Liverpool Class, and have been designed for use in launching on the open beach. Complete with gear and a crew of seven they will weigh only seven tons, and will be capable of carrying thirty passengers, with a cruising radius of 115 miles.

Chief among the improvements will be an amazing watertight engine built so that even if the boat becomes waterlogged and the engine is completely covered with water, it could still be kept running, and hence be steerable!

The clearing ports of the boats will also be improved, and should a wave flood the boat, it will be able to clear itself completely in twelve seconds.

**** Though the average person weighs about ten to eleven stones, his skeleton would be found to account for only 14lb. of this—and there are 240 bones in it.

WORLD'S LARGEST RAILWAY STATION

THE magnificent building of the Grand Central terminal station in New York is the largest railway station, both in size and importance, in the world.

Above road level are all the amazing halls, shops, restaurants, waiting rooms, skyscraper hotels, and huge offices, while the actual stations are below ground level.



A general view of the Grand Central terminal station in New York.

Twenty feet down (reached by slopes, not stairways) is the main line station. This has 29 platforms for trains, and more for luggage—a total of 42 tracks.

Another 24 feet down is the local train station, which has 15 platforms and 25 tracks. All the trains in this section are electric, and some of the lines are extended in loops so that there is no need for trains to reverse!

MARVELS

Discoveries that
are Foretelling
the Future

HE TRAPS "POWER FROM NOWHERE"

A BELGRADE inventor has built a machine which, he claims, will draw electricity in great quantities from the atmosphere.

This is the second device he has constructed for the purpose, and so successful have been tests that the inventor believes if he had sufficient capital he could evolve apparatus which would draw power sufficient to drive tramcars and trains.

This "power from the air" would give Yugoslavia a great industry, for the power would be available to smelt great beds of iron-ore now lying useless for want of coal for the job.

But the hopeful inventor will have a lot of work to do before that time, for at the moment he is working with the machine connected to an aerial on a third floor balcony, and he earths it by fastening a wire to the kitchen tap!

**** The fastest four-engined air-liner yet built in any country has just successfully passed official Air Ministry trials. The machine, which has been built by the De Havilland Company, has a top speed of over 170 m.p.h., and is driven by four 200 h.p. motors on the front of the lower wing.

THIS MACHINE WILL SPEAK LIKE YOU!

A PATENT has been taken out in Czechoslovakia for a machine which can reproduce any and every known sound, including the human voice.

Electrically operated, it is claimed to be able to imitate any voice. The operator has to make a careful analysis of the speaker's voice, and then, seated at a keyboard, he can reproduce it in the exact pitch and tone.

**** If an average modern car were to be taken to bits it would be found to be made up of about 16,000 separate pieces.

NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER—

THE difficulty of charging radio accumulators where no mains supply or private plant exists has been overcome in a novel way in an Indian Frontier village.

A second-hand motor-car lighting generator has been acquired for the purpose, and this is belt-driven from the jacked-up wheel of a bicycle.

Power is provided by schoolboys doing a few minutes' pedalling in turn as part of the morning's gymnastics!

**** IN THE London area 2,750,000 local telephone calls are made every day.

THE PUNKAH GOES MECHANICAL

EVEN India, one of the last strongholds of the old ideas, is going modern.

The idea of natives swinging giant punkahs to keep their masters cool gave way to an electrically-driven punkah—which naturally was rather expensive.

But now Japanese exporters are planning to flood India with cheap electric fans in place of these expensive punkahs. They will cost about 15s. and be spring-driven. Once wound up, their action is so automatic that they will need no further attention for eight hours.

Such fans should have a tremendous sale in India where there are large regions without electricity, and millions of purchasers cannot afford the dearer punkahs.

No. 1

Out to-day

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and AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHY

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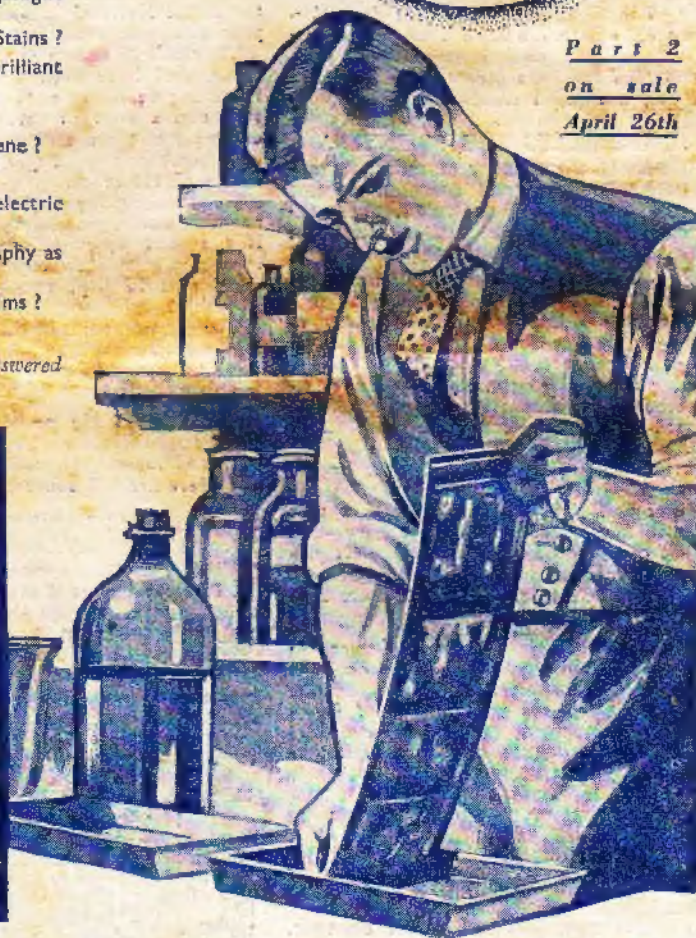
Can You Answer These Questions?

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- How long does the copyright in a cine film and a photograph last?
- What are the causes and remedies for the following defects in gaslight prints:—
Black Spots, Blisters, Brown Stains, White Specks, Yellow Stains?
- What developer would you use for gaslight paper to give the most brilliant print? What developer would give softer contrast?
- What printing process gives prints like oil paintings?
- When must a cine camera be held upside down in shooting a scene?
- When is f/8 stop not f/8?
- How do lamps used for photographic studios differ from ordinary electric light bulbs?
- What is the difference in lighting an indoor scene for cinematography as distinct from still photography?
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